# THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR

*Vol. 5* *Spring · 1936* *No. 2*


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SPRING · 1936 VOLUME 5 · No. 2

# The American Scholar

KNOWING that we can, we assume the right to play providence to others, to train and educate them, choose for them, frame conditions for their living, and shape the course of their lives. It is a godlike assumption, this assumption of governorship and dominion. It takes a lot of wisdom to rule one's own life: how much more to rule that of others! It takes supreme wisdom when the question is of life or death. Too nervous a contemplation of our assumptions would reduce us to impotence, so many put it aside or refuse to contemplate it at all. They are practically wise, but it is questionable whether they are wholly so. Life is not wholly a practical matter. It suffers less from vision and wonder present than with them absent.

FREDERICK J. E. WOODBRIDGE

*The Son of Apollo*, published by Houghton, Mifflin Company

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# The American Scholar

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At one time professor of English, Harvard; now president of Smith College; member, board of trustees, many social enterprises; author of many books, scholarly and appreciative, in the field of English literature.

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Editor, *Journal of the American Medical Association*; associate clinical professor of medicine, Rush Medical College, University of Chicago.



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# SACRED CONSTITUTION

In arguments over the sacredness of the Federal Constitution, evolution is *pro* and revolution is *con*, no matter whether the evolutionists or the revolutionists so call themselves. During these days citizens should keep asking themselves and one another the old question, "If you call a dog's tail a leg, how many legs will he have?"

A written Constitution guarded by a Supreme Court—both of which are sheltered from the uncertain winds of public sentiment—is needed by democracy today more than ever before. A wise people will protect themselves against themselves, for, like a wise individual, they know that times come when passion with its siren song of immediate satisfaction makes swine of the strongest men.

Before the day of the chain newspaper, the motor car, the sound picture, and the radio, public opinion took shape much more deliberately. Then neither the demagog's mouthings nor the golden voice of powerful self-interests could so seductively fill the length and breadth of the land.

Without a Constitution obstinately requiring a deliberate process for its amendment the orderly advance of civilization would be continually threatened. Adaptation, however, by judicial interpretation is desirable if actually kept to interpretation. Civilization should develop only in such a way as to preserve the good from the past while acquiring the better from the future. Such development can be most reasonably expected from an educative process which bases every forward step upon the firm ground of majority understanding and support.

After all, the chief excuse for democracy is that it is the form of social order most likely to cultivate all the creative capacities of all the people. A Constitution with strict amendment provisions—and the course of the Prohibition amendment shows that the way is not too difficult—is the surest guarantee of such cultivation, and therefore of the greatest realization of human potentialities.

This does not mean that any article of the Constitution should be held more sacred than the article which provides for changing the Constitution. The arguments *pro* and *con* must include that article, else they are not *pro* the Constitution at all, but *pro* the *status quo*, and that is *pro* revolution, for the *status quo* must change, if not by evolution, then otherwise. From the point of view taken here the amendment provision is the most sacred part of the covenant, for efforts to amend the Constitution promote the general enlightenment of the voters.

Without such a Constitution, crises would frequently distort judgment temporarily and cause regrettable sacrifice of the hard-earned personality values of democracy. The deluding expediency of popular panaceas tends to make dictators of political quacks. In times of stress the rehabilitation of economic abundance or of national pride may be undertaken at the cost of exhausting the sources of creative spontaneity. Then the Constitution can be the stabilizer on the ship of state—a stabilizer, not an anchor.

W. A. S.

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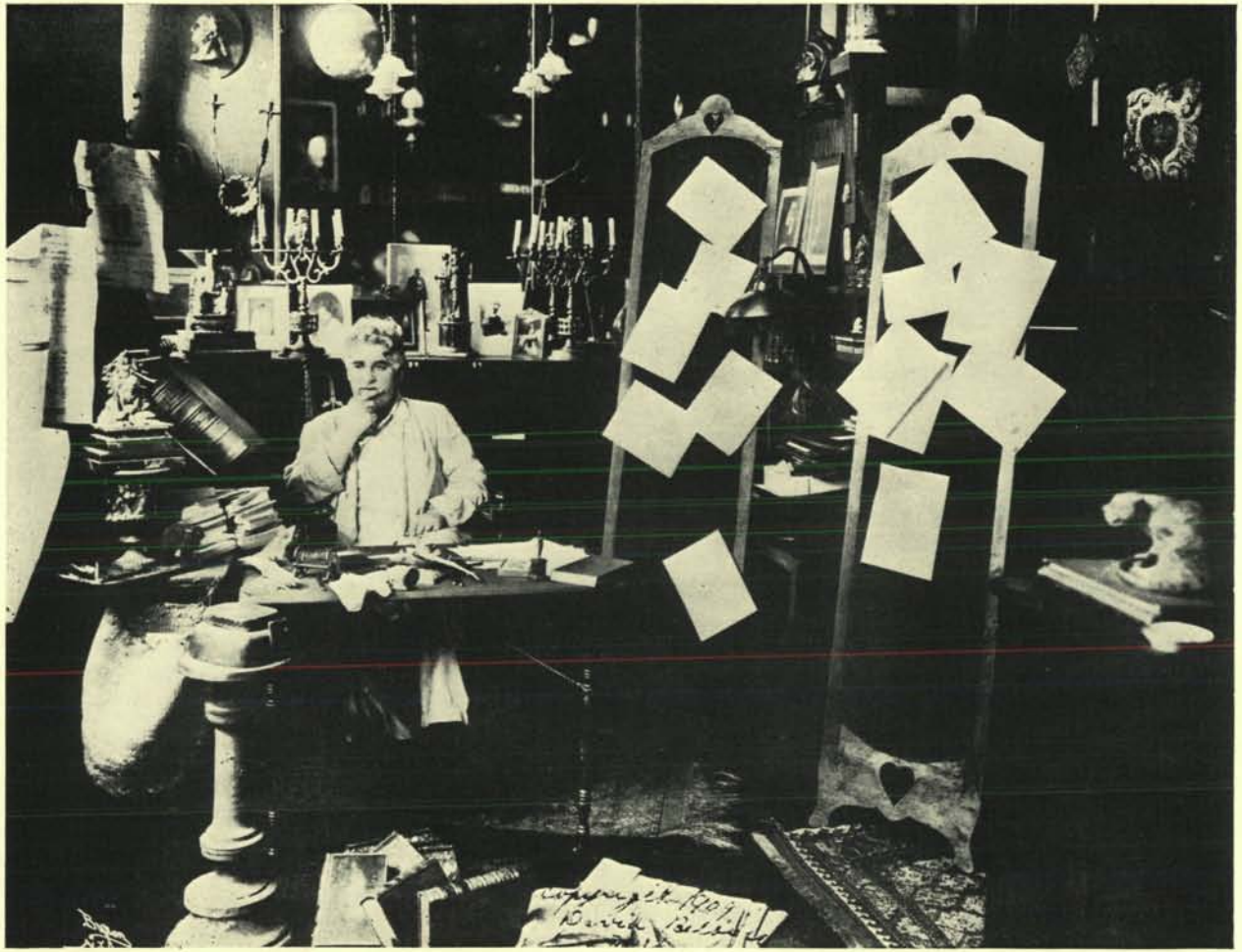

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DAVID BELASCO IN HIS STUDIO

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# Pacifism Against the Wall

REINHOLD NIEBUHR
*Professor of Applied Christianity, Union Theological Seminary*

THE Italian-Ethiopian dispute has brought the problem of the compatibility between consistent pacifism and support of the League of Nations to a sharp focus. Since the War pacifist sentiment has increased to a remarkable degree, particularly in England and the United States. From the traditionally pacifist Christian sects, such as the Quakers, it has spread to the Christian churches in general. To a certain degree it has also expressed itself in purely secular terms. Usually this post-War pacifism was compounded with devotion to the principle of collective security embodied in the League of Nations. The present dispute between the League and Italy raises the question whether it is possible to combine the pacifist disavowal of every form of armed conflict with the obligations of international government, implied in the organization of a League of Nations. Pacifists have evaded this issue to the present moment by assuming that moral pressure and economic sanctions would constitute a sufficient force with which to discipline a recalcitrant nation. Italy's threat to use military force in the event of a League oil embargo upon her (a threat which has for the moment been successful in preventing the embargo) proves rather conclusively that non-violent sanctions cannot be applied without running some risk of issuing in violence. If any international government should therefore specifically limit its use of force to non-military measures it would insure the futility of such measures. The recalcitrant nation need only declare that it will counter economic sanctions with military measures to scare the international body into impotence. Mussolini's defiance of the League has thus brought the whole problem of the relation of pacifism to collective security into sharp focus.

To understand the confusion of contemporary pacifism on the



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question of sanctions it is necessary to point out that various elements have entered into modern pacifist convictions. The ingredients of the modern compound of pacifism are chiefly three: Religious absolutism as expressed in the Sermon on the Mount; the general presuppositions of modern liberalism—that rational persuasion is gradually and progressively displacing coercion as the method of arbitrating all forms of social dispute; and finally a moral nausea over the brutalities and futilities of the World War.

Religious absolutism in its pure form is either apocalyptic or ascetic. In either case it is not compatible with political responsibility. When apocalyptic, as in the thought of Jesus, it sets the absolute principles of the coming Kingdom of God, principles of uncompromising love and non-resistance, in sharp juxtaposition to the relativities of the economic and political order and assumes no responsibilities for the latter. When ascetic, as in the case of Francis of Assisi or Tolstoi, it sharpens individual ideals of the spirit in contrast to the whole range of physical necessities, from the individual will-to-survive to a nation's will-to-power. It does not deny that the actual world is one of conflict between egoistic impulses or that the business of politics is to reduce this conflict to some kind of equilibrium of balanced egoistic forces. It merely insists that such equilibria are not free of the "sin" of egoism or the peril of conflict. Every equilibrium of contending social forces is only subdued conflict which may break out into actual conflict and every actual conflict may result in violence. In its pure form religious pacifism is therefore a realistic reminder of the fact that the "peace of the world" is never more than an armistice.

Since the dawn of modern liberalism, particularly in America, this religious pacifism has been mixed with the political presuppositions of rational liberalism. The basic presupposition of liberalism is that the forces of rationality are gradually increasing in human society and that we may therefore confidently look forward to the day when all social disputes will be arbitrated by a mutual regard for the rights and interests of opposing parties



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in a conflict situation. This assumption of liberalism implies a very optimistic view of the goodness of human nature, an interpretation of human history in terms of the idea of progress, and a belief that collective behavior differs from individual conduct only in a certain tardiness in reaching the ideals of the latter. These articles of the liberal credo have prompted a great deal of pacifism which justifies itself in pragmatic terms and therefore specifically disavows the political irresponsibility of religious absolutism. It claims that it has actually found a superior social technique for the establishment of peace and justice and therefore seeks to commend its program as a politically wise one. Usually this pacifism defines its position in terms which permit non-violent resistance and coercion and excludes only violent forms of resistance and coercion. It never fully faces the fact that it is impossible to draw a sharp line between violence and non-violence and that every possible economic sanction (boycott and embargo for instance) may result in the destruction of both life and property. In modern religious liberalism this type of pacifism is usually identified with the position of Jesus though there is nothing in the teachings of Jesus which justifies a distinction between violent and non-violent forms of resistance. The perfectionist ethics of the Christian gospels teach complete non-resistance and therefore establish a contrast not between violence and non-violence but between any prudential and pragmatic effort to establish justice and maintain peace by resistance, coercion and the balance of power, and the millennial and anarchistic ideal of a completely uncoerced and voluntary social peace and cooperation. Sometimes the modern religious liberal seeks to combine the pragmatic considerations of a liberal ethic with the absolutistic motifs of a purely religious ethic. Thus in the writings of John Haynes Holmes, one of the outstanding pacifists of our generation, pacifism is alternately commended as the best method of achieving social justice and as absolutely right whatever its social consequences. This inconsistency runs through practically all modern religious pacifism.

The third element in modern pacifism is moral nausea and



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disillusionment over the futilities and brutalities of the World War. This brings into the pacifist fold a large number of people who have no clear notions about the implications of their position—which is essentially negative. They are not certain how war is to be prevented or how social justice is to be achieved. They merely hold the understandable conviction that armed conflict is in any case a method which destroys the ostensible ends it intends to serve. In this group must be counted the radicals who regard war as the consequence of capitalism and refuse to participate in it because they want to disassociate themselves from capitalistic imperialism and nationalism. Their position, however, is really not pacifistic at all. They have merely decided that conflict between nations is futile and tends to aggravate the social injustices of our civilization. They are equally certain that a class conflict may establish a new type of society in which international conflict will be abolished. But since this group usually does not regard itself as pacifistic and sometimes specifically disavows pacifist principles it deserves the criticisms levelled at liberal pacifists only when, as in the case of radical student organizations, it adopts the "Oxford pledge" as its own. This pledge, which promises to abstain from military defense of the nation under all circumstances, has meaning and sincerity only if it expresses religious absolutism. Among those signing it have been some radical students who would be quite ready to engage in military service provided, for instance, their nation supported Soviet Russia in a war with Japan.

The recent crisis in Europe has prompted a great deal of searching of hearts in pacifist circles and has drawn a clear line of cleavage between the pacifists in whom motives of religious perfectionism are dominant and those who hold to a more pragmatic justification of non-violence. The former are inclined to condemn sanctions because they may lead to war. In England this group, headed by George Lansbury, former leader of the labor party, Lord Ponsonby, its leader in the House of Lords, and "Dick" Shepherd, former Dean of Canterbury and influential in religious circles, have formed a new pacifist organi-



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zation which specifically disavows economic as well as military sanctions. From a pacifist standpoint this position is logical enough, particularly since the present crisis has made it apparent that no form of political and social coercion can be guaranteed never to result in violence. This English group is noteworthy chiefly for the prominent statesmen enrolled under its banner. Yet it seems rather strange that even a saint in politics, of the type of George Lansbury, should not realize that the logic of his position is really incompatible with government itself. If one is to take such a position consistently one must either believe that it is possible to have government without coercion (accept the ideals of anarchism in short) or be indifferent toward the problems of government.

A larger number of pacifists have taken the position that they will support political coercion provided the power of coercion is wielded by an international and impartial organization and provided non-violent means of coercion are used. Thus Kirby Page, one of the most influential exponents of pacifism in this country, heartily advocates economic sanctions against Italy and took the same position with reference to Japan in the Manchurian crisis. The difficulty with this position is that it does not give any guidance to a statesman who, in using non-military sanctions, is faced with the threat of military reprisals. If he should commit himself in advance to the position of his pacifist supporters he would insure the futility of his venture, for the recalcitrant nation is bound to threaten reprisals as soon as economic sanctions really imperil the victory of its arms. Such threats might be made insincerely but the "bluff" in them could be revealed only by risking war. It is interesting to note that the Hoare-Laval proposals, condemned by all supporters of the League as treason against it, were made partly because it was feared that an oil embargo against Italy might lead to war. The British foreign secretary feared such a war, not because of pacifist scruples but because the promise of cooperation by France in the event of war was too reluctant to give him security. He seems also to have been prompted by the consideration that a



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possible Italian-French-English military entente might be more effective in stopping a resurgent Germany than the system of collective security under the League, which Anthony Eden sought to construct. In any event the threat of the use of armed force, dangerous as it is, is still a necessary weapon, even for a League of Nations.

The serious embarrassment of League proponents who are also pacifists is illustrated by a recent article in the English weekly, *The New Statesman and Nation*. The article by C. E. M. Joad justifies pacifist support of the League on the ground that since the world has refused to accept the pacifist solution of disarmament the pacifist is forced to espouse a "second-best" policy. He need not, however, be personally responsible for this second-best policy of sanctions because it is not his own policy.

> The use of force is after all not his policy; and it is only because he has been unable to convert the world to his policy that the use of force by the League has come to seem the least evil of the various courses that are practicable. But the pacifist has no *personal* obligation to take part in a course which he advocates only under duress. . . . His "best" is disarmament. Meanwhile because of the hardness of men's hearts and the thickness of their heads, he is driven to support sanctions as the best that offers under the circumstances and as a means to the absolute best.

This argument is a perfect illustration of the naive individualism of modern liberalism. The necessity of coercion in social life is attributed to the failure of other people to arrive at the same degree of enlightenment enjoyed by the pacifist. It does not occur to him that the necessity of coercion in politics may flow from defects of the human imagination and the human heart which even the most enlightened individuals betray. Can Mr. Joad be really so certain that a higher degree of intelligence will really free human society from the brutal conflicts of power which have characterized all human history? Perhaps the growth of human intelligence will accentuate as well as mitigate this conflict. After all, the "enlightened" nations have a stronger imperial will and are more effective in expressing it than the more vegetative backward nations. Mr. Joad's effort to escape



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the pacifist dilemma reveals how implicit the idea of progress is in all liberal approaches to the political problem. It may be that human history is a much more tragic enterprise than these liberal optimists assume.

An analysis of pacifist scruples about the League and sanctions would be incomplete without reference to the radical position of such men as Sir Stafford Cripps, leader of the Socialist League in the British Labor party. His position, shared by most Socialists in America, is that the League is too much the instrument of capitalistic imperialism to be an effective instrument of peace. It merely supports the satiated imperialistic nations against the hungry ones, Italy, Germany and Japan, whose special crime is that they came too tardily upon the division of spoils in the game of imperialism. This position is not pacifistic in any exact sense of the word. It betrays no scruples against the use of force in government. It merely regards the League of Nations as a pretense in international government rather than as a reality. And it can hardly be denied that many facts support this criticism. The League of Nations did not act in the Japanese-Manchurian dispute because the imperial interests of France and Britain were not threatened by Japanese aggression. Nor did it act energetically against Italy until British interests in Africa were threatened. Even now it fails to act without equivocation because the interests of France and Britain are only partially compatible on this particular issue.

The real fact is that the League of Nations is, in the present moment, the combined force of French and British diplomacy plus the moral prestige of the common opinion of the small nations of Europe. The force of the small nations, as a balance wheel of imperial politics, is the only really significant gain achieved through the World War. But how solid this gain is may well be regarded as a question upon which no clear or convincing answer can be given. Certainly the facts do not justify League enthusiasts who speak of the League as if it were an impartial international government, above suspicion or reproach. The facts do not warrant the kind of loyalty to the League which



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the religious forces of Britain marshalled for the Tory party in the last election, because of its assumed support of the League. Nor is it at all certain that the League of Nations is a sufficiently authentic instrument of international government to warrant America's entry into it at the present juncture. It is more important at the present moment that our neutrality laws should be so designed as to prevent the sabotaging of League sanctions. That is more important than entrance into the League on the one hand and on the other than the kind of neutrality which assumes no responsibility for the disciplining of recalcitrant nations.

While it is important therefore not to overestimate the virtues, achievements or possibilities of the League, it is equally unrealistic to abstain from every possible support of its policies on the ground that its course is dictated or influenced by the imperial politics of Britain or France. One need not regard either British or French diplomacy as morally pure to be willing to use it to prevent a European conflagration. Moral purists who advance this consideration might well be challenged to point to any possible or conceivable force in politics of such purity as their criticism of the League suggests as possible. The fact is that politics is always confronted with the task of beguiling conflicting egoistic wills into some kind of harmony or equilibrium. The anarchy of nations happens to be greater than the anarchy within nations, and for this reason the self-interest of the component parts of an international community is more apparent than in domestic politics. But that is all the more reason why it is inadvisable to make moral demands of too absolute a nature upon the diplomacy of nations. If the League, as now constituted, gives any promise of holding Italy, Germany and Japan in check it is worth supporting even though the radical knows full well that it cannot guarantee permanent peace. The alternative is that each one of these nations, freed of the fear of any international force opposed to them, will break loose, destroy Soviet Russia (by simultaneous attacks on the part of Germany and Japan) and establish a triumphant fascistic nationalism in both Europe and Asia. Such a resolution of the present covert anarchy



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would be decidedly worse than the present uneasy armistice in both Europe and Asia. The armistice has no real virtues of peace in it and cannot last in the long run. But it is better to try to maintain it than to allow overt anarchy to break out. While there is peace there is always a possibility that the imperialistic policies of the dominant nations in Europe will be altered through internal pressure. That is a more hopeful alternative than to permit anarchy to break loose in the hope that the next war will destroy capitalistic imperialism and establish a socialistic peace in the world. The greater probability is that the next war, particularly if it should result in the success of German and Japanese arms, will lead to unalloyed fascism and to a general disintegration of the civilization and the culture of the world.

Absolutistic scruples against the League of Nations and sanctions, whether they are pacifist or radical, thus tend to increase the anarchy which they abhor. That is unfortunately the unvarying consequence of moral absolutism in politics. The political order must be satisfied with relative peace and relative justice. Refusal to participate in its relativities, because they represent imperfect approximations of the ideal of human brotherhood, are bound to lead to a further disintegration of its always tentative peace and its always imperfect justice.

# Bitter Brew

ETHEL ROMIG FULLER

On a stony acre
One fine lad may raise
A crop of purple thistles;
One, a stand of maize.

And if sweet, if bitter,
Only he is knowing
Who harvests in the autumn
That which he was sowing.



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# Scuttling Atlantis and Mu

E. D. MERRILL
*Administrator of Botanical Collections, Harvard University*

SPECULATION on the possible relationships between the pre-Columbian civilizations of America and those of Eurasia continues to fascinate a great number of people and to produce a continuous volume of literature. The subject affords a permanent source of copy for popular writers, who consistently overstress the similarities and assumed similarities between early civilizations of the two hemispheres. "Aztec link to Chinese seen," "Peruvian mummies point to lost continent," and similar head-lines too often betray the fact that some enterprising explorer of Mexico, Yucatan, Central America, Bolivia, or Peru, or his press agent, is preparing to lure the public into providing further funds for the support of future raids into the wilds of nature and fiction. Perhaps it was natural for the earlier European observers in America to attempt to explain what they found here on the basis of possible ancient contacts with Eurasia. But this is no reason why we should give much credence to the idea that the pioneers of civilization in America were the lost tribes of Israel, the Egyptians, the Phoenicians, the Mesopotamians, the Greeks, the Latins, the Welsh, or the inhabitants of an imaginary Atlantis or Mu, or that the advanced peoples of eastern Asia were at all involved.

The ardent exponents of Atlantis, and the fewer but equally ardent exponents of Mu, postulate ancient continents or island groups, long since sunk beneath the sea, the one in what is now the Atlantic basin, the other in the Pacific, readily explaining all resemblances and pseudo-resemblances between the civilization of the New World and that of the Old, whether in architecture, sculpture, hieroglyphics, or in civil, ecclesiastical or political organizations on the assumption of ancient contacts across these lost lands. They attribute, with no tangible evidence, a high order of civilization to the hypothetical peoples of these equally hypothetical areas. The extremists visualize the Atlanteans as



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the parent-colonizers of both the Mediterranean and Caribbean shores, but overlook the fact that there are no philological relationships between American and Mediterranean languages.

As to the Atlantis fable, the fountain-head and oft-quoted classic authority is Plato's *Timæus*, which purports to be a conversation between certain Egyptian priests and Solon regarding the continent. We know that similar legends occurred in various forms among various ancient peoples and it may be assumed that the Atlantis idea was one of these and sprang out of some folk-tale current among several races centuries before Plato dignified it with his name. The Atlantis cult is singularly active, particularly in Europe. If we may trust newspaper accounts, Chevalier's recent paper on the vegetation of the Cape Verde Islands, a group the Atlantis enthusiasts claim to have been part of the ancient continent, provoked the wrath of the Parisian disciples of the Atlantis theory. According to the dispatches "Many scientists are convinced that there is a definite foundation for the legend of the lost Atlantis." But before the close of the 15th century domesticated plants and animals common to the two hemispheres were conspicuous by their absence; yet colonies of ancient Atlantis in the Mediterranean basin and in Mexico and Central America might be expected to have at least some cultivated plants and domesticated animals in common, unless it were indeed true, as one enthusiast affirmed, that the remarkable people of Atlantis had developed no agriculture whatever.

There is a certain school of ethnologists, known as diffusionists, who claim that all advances in civilization originated in and radiated from a common center. They too would derive ancient American civilizations from Eurasia through prehistoric contacts across the Pacific and the Atlantic, undaunted by the distances between the two hemispheres, by manifest lack of recorded contacts until after 1492, and by the absence or inadequacy of ocean-going boats in ancient times. This school apparently cannot admit that any great invention, innovation, or advance in civilization could conceivably have been made independently at different times and among different peoples. In



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taking exception to certain of my conclusions based on agriculture and on the dissemination of cultivated plants, one of its disciples argued with me a few years ago in this wise: Did not agriculture originate in Egypt? Did not the seeds of the wild barley float down the tributaries of the Nile from Ethiopia? Were not these barley seeds self-sown along the mud banks of the Nile? Did not primitive man here find an annual self-sown crop of edible seeds for the taking? On the basis of this natural agriculture were not other advances made, ultimately permitting the development of a highly specialized civilization in Egypt? And from this center did not civilization spread over the world, even to distant America? One need not be a botanist to refute the argument, for every farmer's boy knows that barley seeds do not float and that in water they soon swell and lose their viability as do all cereals. Could such a grain float several hundred miles and still remain viable? No, the "floating barley" would have to be developed by primitive man, for it does not exist in nature. Furthermore wild barley is supposed by botanists to be a native of central Asia. What would the ecologists say regarding a natural habitat of barley that would permit of many of its seeds even falling into running water? What would they reply to the claim that any annual grass could each year become established along the mud banks of the Nile in such quantities as to form an attractive self-sown crop yielding edible seeds as the water receded, and winning out in competition with the luxuriant perennial marsh, aquatic, and riparian native vegetation? Such a theory of the origin of agriculture is manifestly untenable; and with its fall also falls the idea that Egypt was the central source of primitive agriculture. Moreover not a single one of the food plants cultivated by the ancient Egyptians was native to the Nile Valley; they must have come from neighboring countries where agriculture long antedated even the most primitive cultivation in the valley of the Nile.

What is the bearing of the origin and dissemination of cultivated plants and domesticated animals on the problem of the origin of civilizations? Agriculture is undoubtedly essential to



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civilization, for without assurance of an ample and dependable food supply civilization could not have been developed and could not persist. Of the several hundred thousand different species of plants now known, only a few hundred are cultivated for food, and of these a much smaller number may be considered basic food plants. The number of domesticated animals is also very small. And all of these plants and animals were in domestication somewhere in the world long before the dawn of recorded history, whether in Eurasia or in America; but not a single basic cultivated plant and only one domesticated animal, the dog, was common to the two hemispheres in pre-Columbian times. This significant fact is usually overlooked although as early as 1883 de Candolle, in his classic *Origin of Cultivated Plants*, clearly stated that after extensive investigations of the subject he had noted no indication of contacts between the peoples of the Old and the New Worlds before Columbus' voyage in 1492. The fact was so manifest that he did not consider it necessary to amplify his statement further. It was the expansion of European activities that led to the introduction of Eurasian cultivated plants into America and vice versa.

What answer can the enthusiastic Atlantis disciples make to this simple question—What could have been the agriculture of ancient Atlantis that transmitted to the supposed descendant colonies in Europe and America no single cultivated food plant or domesticated animal in common? In prehistoric times expanding and colonizing peoples took with them the plants and animals indispensable for their well-being, as witnessed by the dissemination of Indian species with their Sanscritic names throughout Malaysia, and by the migrating Polynesians who took their few but to them important food plants out of Malaysia. For the coconut, the most important of the cultivated palms, we find the names *niu*, *niuh*, *niog*, *ni*, *nia*, *nioe*, *noe*, and *nor*, all cognate forms of one word, in actual use all the way from Madagascar across the Indian Ocean, through Malaysia, to the extreme eastern islands in Polynesia, Hawaii, and the Marquesas; but the coconut did not reach America until it was introduced



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into Brazil by the Portuguese and a little later into Mexico by the Spaniards. The cognate forms of one word merely indicate that the name was transmitted with the plant in prehistoric times, quite as in modern times such names as tea and coffee have been transmitted through commerce all over the world, the former from the Chinese *tay* and *cha* and the latter from the Arabic *gahwe*.

In modern times our ancestors brought with them from Europe the cultivated plants and domesticated animals which had become necessities of living in the home land—the wherewithal to establish a permanent agriculture and a permanent civilization in America. To these they added certain outstandingly important species which they found cultivated by the aboriginal Americans. Had there been earlier communication between Eurasia and America certainly the advanced people of the Old World would have brought with them at least some of the cultivated plants and domesticated animals characteristic of the civilization of Eurasia. It is inconceivable that advanced peoples reaching America without food plants could have developed an agriculture here on the basis of native, wild-growing plants. The development of agriculture in aboriginal America was a slow process extending over some thousands of years, initiated by primitive invaders who apparently came over a northern route. That they brought with them nothing but the common dog is incontrovertible evidence that they were nomads, living by hunting and fishing, for in the inhospitable regions of the northern parts of the continent the practice of agriculture was impossible. In the many generations involved in their southward migration they would have lost all knowledge of the art of agriculture. This they acquired *de novo* as they learned the qualities of the various native plants they later brought into cultivation. The development of agriculture in America paralleled that in the Old World but was based on an entirely different series of plants and animals.

Native American species are totally different from those of the Old World, and for the most part belong in genera that have



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no representatives in Eurasia. One notes also another striking difference. All of the cereals, with one exception, and most of the temperate-zone vegetables and fruits are of Eurasian origin, originally from temperate or subtemperate regions, whereas most of the American species are of tropical or sub-tropical origin. In each hemisphere there were certain limited areas wherein most of the basic cultivated food plants occurred originally as wild species, and in these limited areas or in regions contiguous to them originated the ancient civilizations. In America the outstanding centers were the highlands of Mexico, Peru, and Bolivia, with secondary centers in Central America and Yucatan. In Eurasia the important areas were the Mediterranean basin, Asia Minor, limited parts of central Asia, and certain parts of northern India and of China.

American contributions to our modern food supply include maize or Indian corn, the potato, sweet potato, tapioca or cassava, the lima bean, field and garden beans, the scarlet runner bean, squash, pumpkin, tomato, pepper, Jerusalem artichoke, sunflower, peanut, arrow-root, chayote, papaya, cacao, avocado, pineapple, custard-apple, cherimoya, soursop, sapote, sapodilla, cashew and others. Tobacco is of American origin. In the field of domesticated animals American contributions were few and relatively unimportant: the llama, alpaca, and Muscovy duck in South America and the turkey in Mexico. None of these plants and animals was known in Europe or in Asia until after the close of the 15th century.

Eurasian contributions were much more extensive, including all cultivated cereals (except maize)—wheat, barley, rye, oats, millet, Italian millet, sorghum, teff, ragi, coix, and buckwheat, the latter of course not strictly a cereal; most of our temperate zone vegetables such as the turnip, rutabaga, cabbage, mustard, chard, radish, beet, parsnip, carrot, onion, leek, garlic, shallot, spinach, lettuce, endive, salsify, celery, asparagus, pea, lentil, broad bean, hyacinth bean, chick-pea, cow-pea, and soy bean; also most of our temperate zone fruits such as the apple, peach, apricot, pear, plum, cherry, wine-grape, prune, fig, almond,



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persimmon, quince, pomegranate, melon, watermelon, and cucumber. The warmer regions of the Old World yielded the banana, orange, lemon, lime, pomelo, date, mango, bread-fruit, jak-fruit, litchi, longan, lansone, mangosteen, coconut, and many other fruits, as well as sugar-cane and various other cultivated economic plants. Furthermore, from Eurasia came most of our domesticated animals, including the horse, cow, sheep, goat, hog, goose, duck, chicken, and pigeon.

The important thing to keep in mind is that not a single cultivated food plant and not a single domesticated animal, except the dog, occurred in both hemispheres until after 1492. The botanical and agricultural evidence is absolutely and wholly in support of the idea, now maintained by most anthropologists, that man entered America from Asia as a primitive nomad. Here he gradually developed his agriculture on the basis of endemic plants and animals, and on the basis of this agriculture in turn developed the really high civilizations characteristic of pre-Columbian Mexico, Yucatan, Central America, Peru, and Bolivia. Here, as in Eurasia, plants once domesticated, with at least rudimentary ideas of agriculture, were transmitted from advanced to more primitive peoples, some species such as tobacco, sweet potato, maize, bean, pumpkin, and squash being very widely planted in both North and South America, far from their original homes, long before the arrival of the Europeans.

There is no need to seek further for the sources of early American civilizations in Europe or in Asia. In America as in the Old World the growth was from the soil, diffusionists to the contrary notwithstanding. The biological evidence wholly supports the belief that agriculture as an art was developed by primitive man in America independent of and unrelated to that of the Old World. And this point of view gives us at least one securely founded reason for assuming that the pre-Columbian civilizations, in North, Central, and South America, had their origins in a primitive people who achieved their high order of culture uninfluenced by intercourse with either Europe or Asia and without the intermediation of any hypothetical "lost" continent.



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# The American Scholar Today

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[NOTE.—This address is the first of a series to be delivered annually, under the auspices of Phi Beta Kappa, at the winter meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, in the interests of clarifying the interrelationships between the sciences and the broader humanities.]

THE title of these remarks you will have recognized as borrowed from the address delivered by Ralph Waldo Emerson before the Harvard Chapter of Phi Beta Kappa nearly a hundred years ago. This address remains the high water mark reached by the great annual tide of such orations; and had it not been for the unreasonable prejudice against delivering orally anything that has already been printed I should have urged the authorities to permit the reading of Emerson's oration as the best possible way of initiating the series which begins tonight.

> My title from a better man I stole—
> O how much better had I stolen the whole!

Not being allowed to steal the whole, I propose to consider with you the main points made by Emerson in discussing the American Scholar of a century ago, to ask how far they hold good today, and to draw from him what we can of wisdom and inspiration and guidance for the American Scholar today.

It was natural and perhaps inevitable that at that date Emerson should speak of the dependence of American upon European culture. This dependence he admits, but his prevailing tone is one of hopefulness that the colonial period is nearly over. "Perhaps," he says, "the time is already come . . . when the sluggard intellect of this continent will look from under its iron lids, and fill the postponed expectation of the world with something better than the exertions of mechanical skill. Our day of dependence, our long apprenticeship to the learning of other



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lands, draws to a close. The millions, that around us are rushing into life, cannot always be fed on the sere remains of foreign harvests." Looking back over the century of American scholarship that has elapsed since these words were spoken, we are forced to admit that the day of emancipation was not so imminent as the orator anticipated. In many branches of learning and science America in 1837 had not even made a beginning and many apprenticeships had yet to be served.

But the day he foresaw has arrived, and American scholarship now stands on its own feet. Not only that, but in many branches, especially in the field of science and invention, it has taken the lead. The question now is no longer of discipleship, but whether the quality of our leadership is to be proportionate to our advantages. For these advantages are greater by far than Emerson could have foreseen and have been increased by some tragic factors which it is fitting for us for a moment to consider.

During the years 1914–1918 the leading countries of Europe sent into the battlefield millions of men. The most dangerous post in battle, as battles were fought in the first year of the War, was that of company commanders, and the captains and lieutenants who led the companies were drawn to a large extent from the ablest class of educated young men. The typical reserve officers were docents or lecturers or research assistants in the universities and they were shot down by thousands at the head of their columns. Today the ranks of scholars and scientists between 40 and 50 years of age, the ranks in which these men should have stood today, in all the leading European countries are thinned and their average of ability pitiably lowered because of the lives that were thrown away. Our country suffered no comparable loss.

Again, in Italy and Germany and Russia forms of government have established themselves that require for their maintenance an attitude towards freedom of thought and speech which is devastating in its effect on intellectual progress. The prescribing of subjects of research by political authorities, the imposing of conclusions to be arrived at, the choice of teachers



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and directors on grounds of political docility, the stifling of free discussion—all these and many other poisonous procedures are already having their baneful effect on the science and scholarship of nations that formerly were leaders in these fields. They are committing national intellectual suicide. The torch is falling from their hands.

As a result of these incredible policies, hundreds of the ablest and freest spirits are fleeing from these unhappy countries and seeking the opportunity to confer upon other countries the benefits of their learning and genius. Our country has received a share. More are knocking at our doors. It will be a profound mistake for our intellectual future if we permit a temporary economic emergency or hampering immigration regulations to prevent us from offering a generous hospitality to men whose consciences forbid them to forswear their intellectual birthright and who come to us stript and ruined but with hands laden with the inestimable riches of the spirit.

These, gentlemen, are the tragic factors to which I have alluded. These Emerson could not have foreseen. I enumerate them, not to exult over the misfortunes of others but to help to bring about a realization of the tremendous responsibility for leadership which they impose on American scholarship today. And when we add to these favorable handicaps so fatally awarded us the advantages of the vast numbers of potential native scholars in our universities, numbers beyond what any nation has ever known, and the wealth of our libraries and laboratories and institutes for research, we find ourselves faced by a challenge so stupendous it is inconceivable that a worthy effort will not be made to meet it.

The greater part of Emerson's speech is devoted to the influences which in his view were calculated to enable the American Scholar to meet such a challenge. But first he restates one of his fundamental ideas: the idea of the man as opposed to the specialist. He realizes the necessity and the economy of the division of labor; but he feels profoundly the risk of men's becoming mere functionaries. "The planter," he says,



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who is Man sent out into the field to gather food, is seldom cheered by any idea of the true dignity of his ministry. He sees his bushel and his cart, and nothing beyond, and sinks into the farmer, instead of Man on the farm. The tradesman scarcely ever gives an ideal worth to his work, but is ridden by the routine of his craft, and the soul is subject to dollars. The priest becomes a form; the attorney, a statute-book; the mechanic, a machine; the sailor, a rope of the ship.

In this distribution of functions the scholar is the delegated intellect. In the right state he is *Man Thinking*. In the degenerate state, when the victim of society, he tends to become a mere thinker, or still worse, the parrot of other men's thinking.

No one will deny the continued applicability of this warning to the state of the scholar today. The ever-accumulating masses of facts in every department of knowledge have made the universal scholar of former ages impossible, and tend to drive the individual worker into a smaller and smaller corner of the field. All the more necessary, therefore, is Emerson's exhortation to him to seek variety of interest, to take time to stand back from his detailed activities and see them in relation to the whole progress of knowledge, to stand back from the acquisition of knowledge and see it in relation to the needs of society as a whole and to himself as a complete man.

I turn now to Emerson's account of the influences playing on the scholar. It is interesting to note that, though he is thinking mainly of the literary student, the first influence he lists—first in time and importance—is that of nature.

What is nature to him? There is never a beginning, there is never an end, to the inexplicable continuity of this web of God, but always circular power returning into itself. Therein it resembles his own spirit, whose beginning, whose ending, he never can find—so entire, so boundless. Far, too, as her splendours shine, system on system shooting like rays, upward, downward, without center, without circumference—in the mass and in the particle, nature hastens to render account of herself to the mind. Classification begins. To the young mind, every thing is individual, stands by itself. By-and-by, it finds how to join two things, and see in them one nature; then three, then three thousand; and so, tyrannised over by its own unifying instinct, it goes on tying things together, diminishing anomalies, discovering roots running under ground,



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whereby contrary and remote things cohere, and flower out from one stem. It presently learns, that, since the dawn of history, there has been a constant accumulation and classifying of facts. But what is classification but the perceiving that these objects are not chaotic, and are not foreign, but have a law which is also a law of the human mind? The astronomer discovers that geometry, a pure abstraction of the human mind, is the measure of planetary motion. The chemist finds proportions and intelligible method throughout matter; and science is nothing but the finding of analogy, identity, in the most remote parts. The ambitious soul sits down before each refractory fact; one after another, reduces all strange constitutions, all new powers, to their class and their law, and goes on for ever to animate the last fibre of organisation, the outskirts of nature, by insight.

The phrasing here is no doubt that of a layman, but, I venture to guess, a layman who, considering the date, had fairly grasped the purpose and method of natural science. Having stated his view of its purpose and method he goes on with more daring to foretell its results. The scholar, he prophesies,

shall see that nature is the opposite of the soul, answering to it part for part. One is seal, and one is print. Its beauty is the beauty of his own mind. Its laws are the laws of his own mind. Nature then becomes to him the measure of his attainments. So much of nature as he is ignorant of, so much of his own mind does he not yet possess. And, in fine, the ancient precept, "Know thyself," and the modern precept, "Study nature," become at last one maxim.

These eloquent sentences, I imagine, are less likely to command the assent of the modern scientist. A Brookline clergyman who was present when Emerson made this address wrote in his Diary that it was to him "in the misty, dreamy, unintelligible style of Swedenborg, Coleridge, and Carlyle." I am reminded by this passage of the lofty incursions into theology and metaphysics that I not infrequently find in the final chapters of books on the universe written today by eminent astrophysicists. These moving perorations, my philosophical colleagues tell me, are unfortunate trespassings into fields where the scientist is not at home, and I gather that the philosophers rather wish the scientist would stick to his own line.



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But Emerson is a philosopher rather than a scientist, and he would undoubtedly have resented any attempt to restrict his speculations on things in general. The influence of his fundamental ideas upon the thinking of Europe as well as America has been vast. Professor Shorey, in a late Phi Beta Kappa oration in Cambridge, calls him "without any exception in any country, the most influential writer of the nineteenth century"; and traces his influence on philosophers like Herbert Spencer and William James. It is not, however, to writers of technical philosophy that he has mattered most but to the thinking of men of letters and the general cultivated public. Emerson's precept and example are both against discouraging what I may call amateur philosophizing on the part of scientist and scholar, indeed on the part of anyone. The emphasis on the whole man with which his address opens implies the duty of everyone to attempt to unify his experience and harmonize his universe. If the mastery of the jargon, not to speak of the ideas, of the professional metaphysician must be a preliminary to such an attempt, the outlook is discouraging.

The objection to the naturalist as philosopher is, however, not confined to the philosophers. An even bitterer resentment is often voiced by fellow scientists who seem to feel a certain disloyalty in such behaviour, so that one must wonder whether Emerson was wrong in prompting us to such flights. I am inclined to think that a closer examination would show that the objection lies, not to every man's attempting to work out his own philosophy but to the tendency to use a prestige gained perhaps in a highly specialized technical subject, to give weight to opinions in another field or on things in general. The modern newspaper interviewer has made of this a menace beyond anything Emerson imagined as threatening the American scholar of the future.

Next to the influence of Nature, the address discusses the influence of the Past on the scholar, and of the Past mainly as contained in books. "The theory of books," according to him,



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is noble. The scholar of the first age received into him the world around; brooded thereon; gave it the new arrangement of his own mind, and uttered it again. It came into him, life; it went out from him, truth. It came to him, short-lived actions; it went out from him, immortal thoughts. It came to him, business; it went from him, poetry. It was dead fact; now, it is quick thought. It can stand, and it can go. It now endures, it now flies, it now inspires. Precisely in proportion to the depth of mind from which it issued, so high does it soar, so long does it sing.

Such, so lofty, is his conception of the function of literature, and it can scarcely be bettered. The necessity for the author to base his work upon knowledge and sound observation, the equal necessity for a transmutation into something more universal by passing through a vivifying mind—these have hardly anywhere been more adequately stated. But no artist, he holds, can

entirely exclude the conventional, the local, the perishable from his book, or write a book of pure thought that shall be as efficient, in all respects, to a remote posterity, as to contemporaries, or rather to the second age. Each age, it is found, must write its own books; or, rather each generation for the next succeeding. . . .

Yet hence arises a grave mischief. The sacredness which attaches to the act of creation,—the act of thought,—is transferred to the record. The poet chanting, was felt to be a divine man: henceforth the chant is divine also. The writer was a just and wise spirit: henceforward it is settled, the book is perfect; as love of the hero corrupts into worship of his statue. Instantly, the book becomes noxious: the guide is a tyrant. The sluggish and perverted mind of the multitude, slow to open to the incursions of Reason, having once so opened, having once received this book, stands upon it, and makes an outcry, if it is disparaged. Colleges are built on it. Books are written on it by thinkers, not by Man Thinking; by men of talent, that is, who start wrong, who set out from accepted dogmas, not from their own sight of principles. Meek young men grow up in libraries, believing it their duty to accept the views which Cicero, which Locke, which Bacon, have given; forgetful that Cicero, Locke, and Bacon were only young men in libraries, when they wrote these books.

So he finds it necessary to give warning against the danger of being bullied by books. Believing that the one thing in the world of value is the active soul he tells us to beware of the tyranny of



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the classics, to beware lest instead of inspiring they suppress, restrict, dominate each man's individual thinking. When the flame of our own creative activity dies down, books can rekindle it. The congeniality of old authors affords evidence of what he calls the philosophical doctrine of the identity of all minds—

> there is a portion of reading quite indispensable to a wise man. History and exact science he must learn by laborious reading. Colleges, in like manner, have their indispensable office,—to teach elements. But they can only highly serve us, when they aim not to drill, but to create; when they gather from far every ray of various genius to their hospitable halls, and, by the concentrated fires, set the hearts of their youth on flame. Thought and knowledge are natures in which apparatus and pretension avail nothing. Gowns, and pecuniary foundations, though of towns of gold, can never countervail the least sentence or syllable of wit. Forget this, and our American colleges will recede in their public importance, whilst they grow richer every year.

How admirable, salutary, appropriate to the present hour!

The third influence upon the scholar is the influence of action. Emerson here combats the idea of the scholar as a cloistered recluse and insists that action, mingling with contemporary life, is essential to the scholar because without it he is not yet man. Thus at every stage of his argument he returns to his insistence on complete manhood. "Only so much do I know as I have lived." "I do not see how any man can afford, for the sake of his nerves and his nap, to spare any action in which he can partake."

He understands action in the widest sense. Everything we live through, after a period of incubation, is capable of producing thought. "Cradle and infancy, school and playground, the fear of boys and dogs, and ferules, the love of little maids and berries" as well as the most strenuous and heroic labors of our maturity are the raw material of the truth the scholar lives to achieve. The life of the scholar he conceives of as an alternation between thought and action, an illustration of that rhythmic polarity which pervades all nature, physical and spiritual. Of the two, action, living, is more important than thinking, even for the scholar, because "character is higher than intellect."



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To the modern investigator, conscious of the intensity of application and the weight of facts necessary for the achievement of new truth in even the smallest subdivision of the field of science, such doctrine may well seem unacceptable. Yet properly understood Emerson is surely right when he says that "time shall teach him that the scholar loses no hour which the man lives." Nor can society be safely deprived of the wisdom and trained judgment of the scholar in a time when social and political life is complex and confused beyond all precedent, when the "practical" men to whom these matters are usually left have confessedly lost their bearings and are drifting without chart or anchor.

These considerations receive further emphasis and support when he passes from the education to the duties of the scholar. What he has to say of these is based upon the central idea of his teaching—the supreme importance of self-trust. "The office of the scholar is to cheer, to raise, and to guide men by showing them facts amid experiences." This requires a severe discipline: observation, long, laborious, unrewarded; scorn of ease and luxury and popularity; the proclaiming of "whatsoever new verdict Reason from her inviolable seat pronounces on the passing man and events of today."

For the performance of these functions the virtues implied in self-trust are required—freedom and courage.

The address closes with some observations on what he considered the peculiar characteristics of the America of his own day. It is interesting to learn that a hundred years ago people were bewailing their age as one of Introversion. "We, it seems, are critical; we are embarrassed with second thoughts; we cannot enjoy anything for hankering to know whereof the pleasure consists" and so on. Emerson does not deny this but thinks it may not be a thing entirely to be lamented. From it he draws a moral as appropriate and as bracing for us today as it was three generations ago. "If there is any period one would desire to be born in —is it not the age of Revolution; when the old and the new stand side by side, and admit of being compared; when the en-



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ergies of all men are searched by fear and by hope; when the historic glories of the old can be compensated by the rich possibilities of the new era? This time, like all times, is a very good one, if we but know what to do with it." Finally he ends with an eloquent assertion of the dignity and importance of the individual. The hope of America, the hope of the world, lay for him in the realization by each man of his own worth and possibilities.

> Is it not the chief disgrace in the world, not to be an unit; not to be reckoned one character;—not to yield that peculiar fruit which each man was created to bear, but to be reckoned in the gross, in the hundred, or the thousand, of the party, the section, to which we belong; and our opinion predicted geographically, as the north, or the south? Not so, brothers and friends,—please God, ours shall not be so. We will walk on our own feet; we will work with our own hands; we will speak our own minds.

Such, then, is Emerson's view of the American scholar in 1837, of the influences which should mold him, of the duties which he should seek to fulfil, of the spirit which should animate him. If now we attempt to sum up the functions of the American Scholar today, we shall find I believe that, with some inevitable changes of emphasis and idiom, the modern view will be found to be in substantial agreement with that of 100 years ago.

There are three main aspects under which I should like to discuss the work of the modern scholar, whether his field be nature, or society, or the individual man: that of the detailed investigation of particular phenomena, that of generalization from the data thus obtained, and that of the announcement to the general intelligent public of his results—research, synthesis, and popularization. In the first of these, modern science and scholarship are operating as never before. The fields are parcelled out into smaller and smaller sub-divisions, the number of workers is enormously increased, the improvement of mechanical devices has made possible apparatus for observation and measurement of an accuracy and delicacy hitherto undreamed of, and the resultant accumulation of new facts is stupendous.



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In these processes there is room for a great variety of talent. A division of labor more minute than Emerson had any idea of is called for; but the qualities of character on which he insisted are as imperative as ever: patience, persistence, courage, carelessness of reward, utter devotion to truth. Many of these workers will often by the limitations of their capacities be merely rank and file, working on plans devised by superior officers, but it is desirable both for the interests of the task and the development of the worker that the aim of the plans be understood as far as possible by the private soldier. It was a great scientist, Louis Pasteur, who defined democracy as that form of organization that leaves every man free to do his best for the welfare of society. The application of this conception of democracy to scientific work points to the largest practicable sharing of the long distance aims of an investigation with the apprentices and the journeymen. From among them will arise the master-minds of tomorrow, from them at any moment may come the fertile observation, the idea which may contain the long-sought clue. To use Emerson's figure, they must be hands, not mere fingers; not mere observers, measurers, calculators, but men observing, measuring, calculating.

I suppose that in the history of every branch of learning there have been periods when the desire to generalize has outstripped the collecting of facts and has brought discredit on scholarship in general. In early times when philosophy and science were not yet differentiated, the general ideas which men put forth in their gropings in the dark for an explanation of the world without and the world within were often centuries ahead of the factual observations by which they could be checked and tested. And in more recent times there is discernible an alternation between periods of emphasis on the finding of facts and periods of speculation. Today, in theory, there is general acknowledgment of the importance of imagination in science, and general acceptance of the method of trial hypotheses. Nevertheless, many branches of American scholarship suffer from timidity. We learned, almost too well, the importance of training our young



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scholars in methods of fact-finding, of warning them against jumping to conclusions and making premature generalizations, and sometimes neglected to teach them that truth lies not in facts but in the relations between facts. A glance over the programs of the annual meetings of our learned societies will show that the ranks of scholarship are still crowded with fearful souls who are mining facts in dark galleries, and lack courage and imagination to seek their significance. Yet it is in their significance that the whole value of research lies. Those who have in their hands the training of future scholars and scientists need delicate perception of kinds of ability and a high degree of tact to administer the proper doses of discipline on the one hand and inspiration on the other. Judging from the impression of our publications which seems to prevail among many European scholars, we can still afford to try to develop in our young scholars the power of generalization, and to teach them to be dissatisfied until every accumulation has yielded its meaning and contributed to a synthesis.

I come now to the question of popularization. It is natural and proper that the scholar should seek his first audience among his fellow scholars, that he should submit the results of his labor and thought first to a jury of his peers, and should find his main satisfaction in their approval. Until their verdict has been rendered there is danger, both to the scholar and to the truth he believes he has discovered, in carrying it to the lay public, and the shade of disapproval that hovers about the word "popularizer" has its origin in a wholesome reluctance. Realizing this, I yet wish to make a plea for the rights of the intelligent public outside the ranks of professional investigators to share the results, and to be given this share by the leaders of science instead of by the camp followers. I am aware of the fact that the leaders are very busy, that original research is very engrossing, and also that they are often afraid of that shade of disapproval of which I have spoken. But the tendency to the esoteric is both unfair and dangerous. It is unfair to the society that makes our investigations possible: it ought to be protected against a merely journal-



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istic presentation of what is discovered. Many scholars speak severely of the vulgarization of the results of scientific progress by newspapers and magazines, and they are often unjust. A newspaper nearly always prefers to quote a first-hand authority; a magazine is only too glad to let the discoverer speak for himself. The main reason why inaccurate reports of such matters reach the general public is the unwillingness or inability of the research scholar to provide an account for the general reader himself. We may as well recognize the fact that the newspapers and the public will be served, if not by those who know, then by those who half-know. The support of research must ultimately come from the laity: it is of immense importance that the laity be as well-informed as possible. That it can be done with dignity and no sacrifice of scholarly integrity is abundantly proved by the example of such men as Tyndall, Faraday, and Huxley, to choose examples from only one country and one generation.

It may be objected that there is much of the greatest importance in modern science that is too difficult to be explained to the general reader, and from sad personal experience I have to admit that this is probably true in some cases. But I believe it is not nearly so frequently true as the specialist is apt to think. The ideas most difficult to explain to the layman are often those that are obscure also in the mind of the professional. Even if the attempt be not wholly successful, it is a wholesome and bracing discipline to submit an idea to the test of exposition to the intelligent but ignorant.

Much of the difficulty comes from terminology. I am well aware of the fact that a technical terminology may save time and avoid inaccuracy: in mathematics, of which I know nothing, it would seem to be essential and untranslatable. But at the risk of being numbered with the Philistines I venture to say that it is often unnecessary hocus-pocus. The medical profession, for which I have unbounded veneration, has for a thousand years harbored practitioners who sought to gain prestige among the ignorant by using Greek and Latin terms for phenomena with perfectly good English names. And today the sociologists are



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building up a terrible jargon, though I have yet to find in their books an idea which is not capable of being explained in standard English. No, the attempt to write for the laymen need not be by any means a total loss of time or dignity. It can be a powerful agent in clarifying the thought and purifying the style of almost every branch of study.

The possibility of the combination of all three functions—of investigator, generalizer, and popularizer—is proved by a large number of its achievements among our own contemporaries. I may be permitted to cite as an outstanding example that of the distinguished scholar who occupied this platform two nights ago. The President of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, Professor Edward Thorndike, has combined the career of a minute investigator with that of a broad thinker upon the whole range of human nature, and by writing intelligibly and interestingly has profoundly influenced educational practices over this country and beyond. I should like to speak in more detail of one of our most distinguished colleagues whose recent death has deprived American scholarship of one of its most brilliant ornaments. James Henry Breasted is an outstanding example of Emerson's Man Thinking. Graduated from the small North Central College in Illinois, he, after a short diversion into theology, pursued his training at Yale and Berlin, and in 1894 became an Assistant in Egyptology in the University of Chicago. He was a great Oriental linguist and with this equipment he conducted prolonged and strenuous field research in the half buried cultures of the East. He did spade work in the most literal sense of the term. On the basis of knowledge thus laboriously acquired he went on to the reconstruction of the life, art, and thought of ancient peoples, and published his conclusions in a series of historical and philosophical works that have fascinated readers from the high school boys who relish his *Ancient Times* to the most erudite students of Egyptian Archeology. He was triumphantly successful in all three stages of scholarly activity, and each stage gained because he worked on the others also. With reverence and admiration I would pay tribute to the



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memory and achievements of a superb representative of the American Scholar of today.

Before I close I wish to draw attention to the fact that whether in discussing Emerson's view of the American Scholar in 1837 or our own view of the American Scholar of the twentieth century, there has emerged no antithesis between the scientific and the literary type. This is as it should be. This meeting under the auspices of the United Chapters of Phi Beta Kappa and on the invitation of the American Association for the Advancement of Science was conceived, I believe, as a symbol of the fundamental identity of two ideals. The sound humanist acknowledges necessity in the scientist's zeal for precision and accuracy in the amassing of facts, for severe logic in manipulating them. The intelligent scientist pushes beyond the limits of his special field to the significance of its data for mankind as a whole. In their highest instances, in a Huxley or a Breasted, no one can deny them either title. While we are each going about his special interest, when we gather as in this city now for the communication of our annual gains, it is wholesome and fitting that an hour should be given to remembering our American philosopher's ideal of Man Thinking. The philosophy which this society proclaims as the guide of life is something much wider and yet closer to the facts of life than the traditional problems of metaphysics. It is a humanistic philosophy in the sense that it embraces everything everywhere and in every period that touches human life. The range and complexity of the knowledge which has already been amassed is universally acknowledged to be far beyond the grasp of any individual, however richly endowed. But, in spite of this, there remains the obligation to vary our interests in an endeavor towards that type of balanced personality which wise leadership demands. The qualities and conditions necessary for the production of that type are still those which Emerson demanded—single-minded devotion to truth, courage, freedom, and self-reliance. "We will walk on our own feet; we will work with our own hands; we will speak our own minds."



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# The Future of Local Government

MURRAY SEASONGOOD
*Lawyer, formerly Mayor of Cincinnati*

IN this century and particularly in the last twenty-five years there has been an extraordinary improvement in the technique of local government, accompanied by a great spread of activities in this field. We take for granted that there should be municipal airports. Jamestown, New York, is now seeking federal funds for a municipal milk plant to cost about $250,000. This, if placed in operation, would supplant 63 private dealers. Municipal housing has, of course, received a great impetus, as has recreation. Cincinnati maintains a large university supported by city taxation, a municipal forest of some 1100 acres, and has recently taken over the formerly private zoological garden. Recreational, esthetic, and cultural activities have increased enormously. At least one of our great cities levies a tax for the support of its symphony orchestra. Public ownership of utilities is going ahead rapidly. And these instances of the expansion of functions assumed by local governments could be greatly multiplied.

Sound budgeting, bureaus of governmental research, municipal reference libraries, leagues of municipalities, municipal expositions, periodicals devoted to local government, citizens' leagues, the League of Women Voters, the National Municipal League, labor saving devices well utilized in the service of local government, proportional representation, the Massachusetts form of ballot, the non-partisan form of ballot, and other new forms of voting, together with voting machines and permanent registration, the merit system, home rule in local affairs, the council manager and county manager plans of government, zoning and planning, state and regional—all were practically unknown in this country a generation ago. In 1898 the first three state leagues of municipalities were organized. Now there are



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37. There are, now, state planning boards in 28 states. The council manager plan of government was initiated in 1908 at Staunton, Virginia, with Charles E. Ashburner as the first city manager, a man who up to the time of his recent death was in service almost continuously in various municipalities. There are now some 450 council manager cities and villages and six manager counties and at no time has there been any retrogression. The growth would have been much more rapid if the cities generally had been free, as in a few states, to adopt their own forms of local government.

"City Management has come of age," said H. L. Woolhiser, President of the International City Managers' Association at the 21st annual conference of city managers in 1934. "In 1914, there were only eight city managers, principally engineers without much public experience. Now three-fourths of our city managers have previously held public administrative positions. There have been 217 promotions of city managers from one city to another. We are achieving a definite professional status in public service, characterized by high standards of training, obligations and ethics."

The essentials of an efficient government plan involved in the council manager form have been well summarized as follows: responsiveness to the people; a simple, direct and responsible administrative organization; a trained and competent personnel; and an enlightened public opinion.

It is illuminating to discover that many cities having the city manager form of government appear on the lists of cities having the lowest tax rates. "The average adjusted tax rate for the city manager group of cities reported is $25.06 as contrasted with $26.79 which is the average adjusted rate for the cities having other types of government." [1]

One matter not often considered, however, in connection with the council manager plan, overlooked sometimes by the managers themselves, is that a competent and public-spirited mayor and council are essential to the proper working of the

[1] *Greater Cleveland*, publication of The Citizens' League of Cleveland, Vol. X, p. 126.



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plan. Since they are the policy-determining body, if they are the common political type of mayor and council their policies will be bad. There will be jealousy shown toward the city manager, and his efforts, however excellent, can easily be frustrated by the demands of patronage and interference. If there is a weakness in the council manager plan it is that ordinarily the position of mayor is not accorded the dignity and responsibility it should have for the successful working of the system. Unless people of the right kind are willing to serve and unless the electors are willing to make the sacrifices necessary to enable men of such type to hold office the council manager plan will not achieve good government for a community and the best of managers will be a failure.

What of the future in the field of local government? Hosea Biglow said "You must never prophesy unless you know." The hazards of forecasting are greater now than ever because of the great changes in government taking place from day to day. If the desire to obtain good local government had but kept pace with the progress in the Art, sound administration of local affairs would be the rule in this country rather than, as now, the exception.

Because of its insistence on lessening the tax burden through constructive economies the depression appeared at first to be an opportunity for improvement in local government. Unfortunately, however, people had not had enough acquaintance with good local government to know where to economize, and the insistence of the overburdened taxpayer was simply upon cutting down taxes and expenses. It was generally assumed that there was great waste in the conduct of city and county affairs and that if the amount of available revenue were diminished "the tax eaters" would have less to consume while the local government business would go on as usual. Therefore taxpayers' leagues, having no real acquaintance or sympathy with local government, demanded less spending. In general they were right but they stopped short of insisting that waste should be eliminated and essential services preserved. Consequently educational, recrea-



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tional, and cultural activities, loosely termed secondary services, were unwisely made to suffer, with a resultant, and predictable, increase in crime and hospitalization.

Next of the misfortunes incident to general poverty was the undue shrinkage in tax values plus the accumulation of delinquencies. By favors and reductions not justified by the facts, supine taxing officials whittled away the tax roll and on a large scale utilized the thoroughly vicious practice of issuing deficiency bonds for current revenues. They gained popularity by not collecting taxes when due from persons and corporations able to pay them. Leniency and favoritism as a means of acquiring political popularity crippled the operations of many localities. Selfish property owners with large holdings, and taxpayers' leagues having no real regard for the interest of their communities, took advantage of the situation to tamper with the whole tax system and to shift taxes to others through constitutional amendment. The property tax has the merit of being collected locally and, in large part, spent locally. But because of the imposition of constitutional limitations upon the extent to which cities, counties, and schools might levy property taxes it became necessary to enact a sales tax and other excises to make up for part of the diminished revenue. An Ohio legislator expressed the difficulty as follows:

> All students of government agree that the constitution of the state should not be a legislative document, and that the state should not be hampered in working out an intelligent tax program by arbitrary limitations in the constitution.
>
> Local governments, without reference to the 10-mill limitation, had in 1934 as compared to 1928 more than $150,000,000 less revenue to carry on their necessary functions including, of course, debt service. The people have voted for old age pensions. Relief needs are still very great. Schools must be financed and taxes must be imposed and collected if government is to continue and these requirements be met.
>
> I am not an advocate of the sales tax but I can conceive of much worse taxes. I believe that the legislature should have as free a hand as possible in dealing with the whole matter of taxation. If you can discourage the circulating and signing of these petitions, it is your duty to



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do so. The continuance of the payment of old age pensions, the financing of relief, the schools and the operation of local government are all at stake.

The large cities paid a heavy price for this shifting of taxation because in the case of many cities located in predominantly rural states, the state exacted from its subdivisions an unduly large fee for collecting taxes and did not return to the local communities their fair share of the receipts. In Ohio there was even an attempt to prohibit by constitutional amendment any levy on real estate. When these property owners and taxpayers' associations speak of reducing taxes, what they really mean is a reduction in their own taxes. Provided they can accomplish their own exemption they care little if anything whether other taxes are increased or local governments fail to function for lack of funds.

Another injury to the progress of good local self-government has come directly from state and federal intervention. Home rule is an essential for the proper development of efficient local administration. It is quite true that there are some units of local government too small to be officered except by petty politicians and to be other than inordinately expensive. On the other hand if one takes away from local communities a sense of initiative, discretion and pride in local achievement, and substitutes therefor a remote state or federal control, one makes aspiration for improved local administration more difficult of realization. It may be that state supervision by commissions, and federal specifications and requirements are better initially than local community performance. But the gain is dearly bought. State commissions are frequently politically dominated and in the federal agencies the merit system has been largely disregarded. If it is left alone a local community may band together and accomplish good government for itself on an independent basis. But if it has to contend with obstructiveness in the whole state or federal government the task is too great.

This is particularly true because of the almost complete acquiescence, in practice, in the belief that local governments are to be used as feeders for patronage to the national parties. The



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independent group, intent on obtaining good administration on the basis of merit and without respect to national party lines, has no friends in the state or federal government. But these latter have contacts only with the official local organization calling itself Democratic or Republican, as the case may be, and the whole weight of federal and state patronage is superimposed on the city administration, often in the persons of those who are the bitterest opponents of the non-partisan group. A state attorney-general for instance who aspires to be governor regards it as essential to have the support of the local machines and consequently appoints as his assistants and deputies the active enemies of the "outsiders." Even judges, unless they are courageous and indifferent to retention of office, are, perhaps unconsciously, influenced not to go counter to the wishes of the local organizations; and in matters of appointment, which should be a judicial act as much as the decision of a case, have no hesitation in selecting for appointment those names certified quite openly to them by the local controlling committee. "Intercession" by the local bosses with the judges, particularly of the police or municipal courts, in behalf of the criminal element because of its voting strength and contributions is not infrequent and does not meet with reprobation. Since the independent local group conscientiously observing the merit system has nothing to offer young men who aspire to hold state and national office, young lawyers who have political aspirations or insufficient legal work to earn a livelihood go almost immediately after their admission to the Bar (and sometimes before) into one or other of the local political machines, either to obtain some temporary award such as an appraiser fee or else some political, legal position in which they receive more than their experience and ability justify. This has a debasing effect upon the whole practice of the law and prevents that interest in study and effort which would fit them, in time, to succeed to important legal employment.

When local subdivisions default on their obligations the state sometimes passes laws permitting municipal bonds to be taken at par in payment of taxes or assessments. In other instances the



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state attempts to exercise supervision and even appoints receivers or commissions to supervise the collection of imposts and the attempted refunding. In this latter method of assistance

New Hampshire was the pioneer. In 1921 a finance commission, to be appointed by the governor, was created to regulate and control the appropriations, expenditures and issuing of certificates of indebtedness by the city of Manchester. Massachusetts, in 1931, enacted a statute of like character for the city of Fall River. In New York a bill, similar in form, has been introduced in the legislature, applying to all defaulting political subdivisions. A New Jersey statute, passed in 1931, varies in providing a smaller degree of supervision. A 1933 Oregon statute provides for court appointment of an administrator for defaulting units of less than 100,000 in population. The approval of the administrator is necessary for expenditures and tax levies; he may remove other than elective officials, reduce all salaries, and also collect assessments. Procedure is outlined whereby on petition of 80 per cent of the bondholders, publication may be had for the remainder and all not dissenting shall be held to consent to the refunding agreement. A proposal of the administration, presented to the 1933 Florida legislature, would create a permanent board with power to reduce budget items and expenditures of all units, and on default to determine the amount of assessments, subject to court review. Indiana, New Mexico, and Oregon have created permanent appointive boards with power to regulate local governments by revising budgets, prohibiting bond issues and setting the amount of tax levies.[1]

The so-called Federal Municipal Bankruptcy Act attempts, with the concurrence of the state in which the defaulting body is located, to utilize the federal power over bankruptcy to scale down obligations or defer interest payments of distressed communities. Since it would plainly be an impairment of the obligation of the contract created when the bonds or notes were issued, the state itself could not do this. The Municipal Bankruptcy Act was passed under a declaration of emergency and for a limited period of two years, but at the end of that time there may be a declaration that the emergency still continues and further extensions of time for the operative life of the enactment. Many assert sincerely that the local governments have become so in-

[1] 46 *Harvard Law Review*, 1320–1.



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volved that, except for such federal aid, they could never extricate themselves from the morass of debt into which they are plunged. These observers are unduly sympathetic. If there were the will to require fair valuations and the payment of necessary taxes, if governing bodies passed more laws allowing the taxing officials to apply for receivers of the affairs of taxpayers able but unwilling to pay their dues, if time and forbearance were extended, most of the issuing agencies could work out their problems. As it is, the causes leading to the financial plight are disregarded. The opportunity for insistence on sound and economical government is lost, there is little effort at rehabilitation, and the blow to municipal credit is severe.

Federal assistance in relief may be essential because of the unprecedented demands and the greater resources of the federal government, but such assistance should take the form of allowances to be administered by the local officials and not by the granting power. Before the N. R. A. codes were invalidated they, too, were an injury to local communities to the extent that they took no account of the excellent credit of many well-governed municipalities and that they interfered with free competition in bidding for public contracts. They placed cities buying in large quantities on the same plane as any small retail purchaser buying for his own slight needs.

If local government in the United States is to cease being what Bryce termed it, "the one conspicuous failure of the United States," there must be a new system of education and a new public morality that will enlist the interest and require the patriotic support of the best elements of the community, and the recognition of local government as not the least, but the most important, branch of American public endeavor. Excellence in local self-government can be a reality where such recognition supports a disinterested governing group; and where local independence is not contravened by a system of political patronage or undermined by unwise aid, financial or advisory, from state or federal sources.



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# Madame Butterfly's Cocoon

## A Sketch of David Belasco

WALTER PRICHARD EATON
*Yale University Theatre*

GOLD in California! Eldorado! Plodding wagons across the Plains! Bones in Death Valley! Clippers headed for the Isthmus with the trade wind under their tails! And on a ship that left England in 1852 a young Jew, Humphrey Belasco, and his bride seeking better fortune than the few shillings he earned in London as a harlequin. They crossed the Isthmus and reshipped to 'Frisco where they arrived almost destitute. There in 1853 in a basement room their first-born, David, made his entrance, with no publicity. Humphrey Belasco had not headed for the hills; he had opened a shop. Five years later he moved to Victoria to trade in furs. In that city a Catholic priest saw little David and persuaded the parents to let him have the boy to educate. But when he was nine David ran away from the monastery with a circus. The Civil War was just over when his family returned to San Francisco where Humphrey opened a small fruit store and the boy of twelve went to school when he could and ran errands and recited poems and ballads in public to earn money to help keep the family together. He also wrote plays. Even at this age he kept a candle and paper by his bed that he might jot down ideas in the night. Most of his ideas came from dime novels.

After his eighteenth year he had no schooling and when he was twenty he married. He could hardly have seemed a good catch to the prosperous family of his bride; he had no job and his soul was set on the vagabond playhouse—doubly vagabond in the Far West of the '70's. With any straggling company that would employ him he toured up and down the coast and back into the hills acting every sort of rôle—"Hamlet," "Uncle



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Tom," "Mercutio," even "Dolly Spanker." For $25 he made a play out of *Enoch Arden* for Annie Pixley—which was $25 more than she paid Tennyson. Often, with his fellow-actors, he had to wash dishes or serve as a waiter to pay hotel bills. For a time he acted at Piper's Opera House in Virginia City, Nevada, when no melodrama of the day could have seemed more sensational than the life about him. Yet here Dion Boucicault stopped to act and employed the dark-eyed, black-haired young Jew as a secretary to help him with a new play, and here he appeared on the same stage with George Giddens, the best "Tony Lumpkin" of the later 19th century. His bent for direction must early have been apparent, for in 1874 he served as hack playwright and stage manager at Maguire's theatre in San Francisco and in 1876, when the famous Lucky Baldwin opened his Academy of Music in the same city, Belasco was made assistant stage manager to James A. Herne. In those days visiting stars traveled about, acting with the local stock companies, and even when there was no star the companies were forced to change their bills frequently. The stage manager had to patch up plays, new and old, to fit the company requirements, and get these plays upon the stage under pressure. Often, too, he himself had to act in them. Belasco acted with Herne, James O'Neill, Barry Sullivan and W. H. Crane at this period and helped to stage plays which ranged from Shakespeare to what would now seem incredible farce and melodrama. In 1876 Edwin Booth visited the city. To be near him and study his art Belasco secured the job of a mere super in his company for the eight weeks of the run. The following year, with a partner, he attempted independence. He wrote a series of sketches which were acted in an entertainment called *The Egyptian Mysteries* and he also came forth and recited *Little Jim*, with light effects devised "so that spirits seemed to float here and there illustrating the sentiments of the lines." It is easy to smile but this was the man who was later to hold an audience spellbound while the night of Butterfly's vigil passed. It was a youth sensing the future of light in the playhouse.

Back at Baldwin's, as full stage manager now, he dramatized



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*The Vicar of Wakefield* for James O'Neill; he rewrote an old spectacle, *Not Guilty*, putting in a battle scene and a conflagration made by illuminated silk strips blown upward, and got it on the stage—all in a week; and, with O'Neill as the Christus, he even staged a Passion Play (which was stopped by the police). In 1879 the popular actress, Rose Coghlan, fresh from Wallack's in New York, arrived, looked at Belasco and exclaimed, "This boy to be my stage manager? Never!" But he was and more than that he made a version of Zola's *L'Assommoir* and compelled Miss Coghlan and another actress to throw real water on each other. It may be that he was combining a bit of revenge with his passion for realism—but the water was thrown. (This play, too, was written and staged in a week. Such were the Palmy Days!) The same year, working with James A. Herne —who, like Belasco, was feeling his way toward a more realistic theatre—he rewrote an old English drama, *The Mariner's Compass*, and Herne acted in it. (In the company was a little girl by the name of Maude Adams.) The two authors decided, however, that the theatrical Eldorado was not California but New York and started east with this play. Although their scenery was seized for debt in Chicago they finally contrived to open in New York on March 29th, 1880. Herne was still in the cast, the play was called *Hearts of Oak*, and they employed real water, real beans, real potatoes, a real cat and a real baby on the stage. But New York was less impressed by these realistic details than bored by the patchwork of ancient and hackneyed situations. The venture failed and Belasco had, literally, to beat his way back across the Continent. Again he went to work for Baldwin, at $25 a week, devising and staging what Boucicault called "sensation dramas," which were then the vogue in England and America. Presently the Madison Square company came to the coast, in *Hazel Kirk*, and Belasco suggested to them a revival of *The Octoroon*. He employed a troupe of colored minstrels, staged the pursuit in the cane-brake in a series of rapidly alternating scenes showing first the pursued, then the pursuer, quite in the manner of the later movies, and so impressed the easterners with the



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effectiveness of his work in this revival that they persuaded him once more to hazard New York.

He was now in his 30th year. By his later reckoning he had already acted 170 parts, large and small, he had written or tinkered with 100 plays, and as stage manager had supervised over 300 productions. The extent of his practice and the industry it represents is amazing. But of course much of the stuff he had worked in was trash and the work was often done at a pace so ridiculous as to preclude pains. He had worked in fine stuff, too, and with fine artists. Left to himself he had forced what effects he could out of sensational or sentimental melodrama and had learned to lean heavily on "situation"—which was, indeed, in such a theatre the rock of salvation. But in manipulating situations on the stage he had shown a flair for realistic illusion and had displayed a creative ingenuity which set him apart.

In New York, from 1882 to 1886, he was hack dramatist and stage manager for the Mallory Brothers, two pious but parsimonious men who controlled the Madison Square Theatre and paid him $35 a week. In 1887 he went with Daniel Frohman to the Lyceum where at last he had a thoroughly good band of actors, sufficient material resources, and time to take pains. With Henry DeMille he wrote, for the Lyceum company, *The Wife*, *The Charity Ball*, and *Lord Chumley* (in which young E. H. Sothern sprang to fame). He also taught in the Lyceum School of Acting, the first dramatic school in America, and in 1888 staged, with his pupils, Sophocles' *Electra*, rebuilding the stage in two levels, the lower for the chorus, and abolishing the footlights. Long later we sent to Germany to learn about such "innovations."

But he was still not his own master and he was determined to be an independent force in the theatre. In 1890 he therefore left the Lyceum and sought to establish himself by presenting Mrs. Leslie Carter as an actress. This lady had been involved in a widely publicized and odoriferous divorce case and when she came to Belasco, begging him to teach her to act, he probably saw in her some germs of histrionic ability but great capacity for



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attracting cash customers. And to this somewhat dubious star he hitched his wagon. At first failure was his portion and he deviated to write a play with Franklin Fyles for Frohman to produce —*The Girl I Left Behind Me*, which was a combination of the main situation in *Virginius* with that in Boucicault's *Jessie Brown, or the Relief of Lucknow*—and it ran for 288 nights in New York! At last, at the Herald Square Theatre in October 1895, with Maurice Barrymore as leading man, Mrs. Carter came forth in Belasco's play, *The Heart of Maryland*, under his own banner; and his independence began. Who now recalls this ridiculous play in which Mrs. Carter to save her lover hung on to the clapper of a bell and swung out over the Maryland landscape? It was the dramatic parallel of "Curfew shall not ring tonight" and was equally appreciated even in the very year when Mansfield was presenting a comedy called *Arms and the Man* by a new author named Shaw. Belasco took this play to London and then presented Mrs. Carter in a "daring" drama from the French, *Zaza*, in which he was all showman.

In 1900 he put a second star in harness, a Californian of rare mettle, Blanche Bates, and when her play proved too thin cast about for a short play to go with it. He read a story by John Luther Long, turned it into a one-act drama, and on March 5th, 1900, at the Herald Square Theatre, *Madame Butterfly* was produced and David Belasco came into his own. He was then forty-seven years old. In this wistful little tragedy—if anything so fragile can be called tragedy—there was full opportunity for that obvious sentiment Belasco had seen affect audiences all his life and no opportunity for sensationalism. The story was simple and direct. There was, however, unlimited opportunity for atmospheric stage effect, for Oriental color, exotic charm, and the creation of mood and emotion by picture and light—especially light. No one who saw that production will ever forget the extraordinary feat Belasco performed when he placed Butterfly, the servant, and the child at their peep holes to watch for the arrival of the ship and then, without lowering the curtain, let night come on, the stars come out, the long vigil pass, the dawn



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flush creep into the sky, the bird voices break out, the sun rise, now revealing two figures fast asleep on the floor but Butterfly still at her vigil. For fourteen minutes by the watch he held an audience in perfect hush—and not one word was spoken on the stage! Here was a correlation of all the elements of dramatic production under perfect control and manipulated by a master. Here was authentic atmosphere, beauty, suspense, human emotion, all obviously the result of infinite care and high theatrical intelligence. Belasco became "the Wizard" from that night.

In 1901 he took an actor out of Weber and Fields' Music Hall and presented him as an East Side peddler in a play called *The Auctioneer*—a vehicle for realistic character portrayal. That actor was David Warfield. The same year he presented Mrs. Carter in a play of his own, *Du Barry*, amid a pomp and circumstance of silk and gold, of courtiers and fine ladies which would have satisfied even the DuBarry herself. The initial cost must have eaten up any profits but Belasco was showing the world what he could do! And in 1902, in his fiftieth year, he achieved at last his own theatre in New York, on 42nd Street (now again, in 1935, the Republic, and degenerated to a burlesque house!), and in December of that year in this theatre he displayed what was to remain perhaps the most completely characteristic production of his life—*The Darling of the Gods*.

The play which grew out of the success of *Madame Butterfly* and his association with John Luther Long was written in active cooperation with Mr. Long and carried Japanese atmosphere to its extreme limits. It told the story of a Samurai revolt in old Japan and the love of the Princess for one of the Samurai, how she betrayed his companions to save him from torture and how he died to redeem his honor but forgave her in the world to come. There were cherry blossoms and exotic silks, moonlit gardens and Samurai swords, pictures of rare beauty illusively composed of authentic furniture and costumes and paint and light. And there were "situations." The climax was reached when George Arliss as the menacing War Minister compelled Miss Bates as the Princess to look down into the red glare of a pit to



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witness (and hear!) her lover's torture. After 33 years I can still see that blood-red light streaming up to gleam on the crafty face of Arliss, on the agonized countenance of Miss Bates. As stage picture it was unforgettable. And it was Sardou's *La Tosca!* Reality of set, beauty and poetry of atmosphere, could not disguise the fact that the story was "devised," and devised to make assault upon our emotion through sheer situation.

In 1904 Belasco presented Warfield in *The Music Master*, by Charles Klein, a simple, sentimental play which made a fortune for all concerned; and he also himself wrote, again with Mr. Long, a Roman tragedy for Mrs. Carter—*Adrea*. Though overloaded with Long's researches into history and with scenic pomp it had a real dignity, but it was not a popular success and marked the passing of Mrs. Carter from Belasco's management. During this period Belasco was in the thick of a battle with the Theatrical Syndicate and to open the play in Washington had to hire a convention hall and at great cost convert it into a theatre. He and Mrs. Fiske were by now almost the only artists who had refused to knuckle under and pay tribute to this iniquitous band of racketeers.

In 1905 came the production of his play, *The Girl of the Golden West*, with Miss Bates. Here was a play about a life he knew, a land he loved—his golden and romantic California. Here was a bar and a dance hall in a mining town, authentic to the last detail and filled with characters and motion which recreated a period. And here was a gambling sheriff out of Bret Harte and a girl who saved her road-agent lover by a card trick —and of course then redeemed him from a life of crime. Here was atmosphere of unmistakable sincerity, a glow of nostalgic and romantic affection for a vanished corner of America—and unblushing (though at the time and under Belasco's spell highly effective) trick melodrama. The following year another play of the West, containing a girl and a bad man, was produced in New York, William Vaughn Moody's *Great Divide*. And the two dramas were separated by a gulf as deep as the Grand Canyon. The one was a romantic situation play, derived from the



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Boucicault-Sardou formula; the other was the illumination of a profound spiritual problem. The meaning of modern drama was beginning to come home to us and thereafter the realism of "the Wizard" began to break down, on critical examination, into paints and properties and lights and carefully trained acting.

In 1907 Belasco achieved a second theatre in New York, built under his direction and magnificently equipped (the present Belasco, on West 44th Street). In 1909 he here produced Eugene Walter's *The Easiest Way*, a Pineroesque play of Broadway life, and it seemed for a moment that he was going to ally his talents with the new drama—for *The Easiest Way* at that time appeared fresh and important. But he made no further excursions along this line, unless perhaps in his own play for David Warfield, *The Return of Peter Grimm*, produced in 1911. In the single setting for this latter drama he carried realistic detail about as far as it can go and actually gave the sense not only of a room but of an entire house which had been lived in for generations. The story was simple. Old Grimm had made a mistake in life and in the last act (after his death) he returned and tried to "get through" to the living to correct it. Here was a situation of direct pathos which could also have been fraught with spiritual strangeness. With uncanny skill, as director, Belasco managed the spirit return and Warfield handled the pathos well. But Grimm returned exactly the man he was in life; the play made no real exploration into "that undiscovered bourne."

Many productions, famous and successful in their day, continued to adorn his stage—comedies like Molnar's *The Phantom Rival* (1914), staged with silken grace; dramatic romances like *Marie Odile* (1915), produced without footlights and with plastic lighting supposed to be the possession of the Germans; American trifles like *The Boomerang*, by Smith and Mapes, so plausibly and delightfully acted that it ran more than a year; again the romantic melodrama with *The Heart of Wetona* by Willard Mack (1916); in 1917 Middleton and Bolton's *Polly With a Past* in which the Wizard recognized and gave scope to the comedy gifts of Ina Claire. But Belasco left



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Molnar's *Liliom* alone; he produced no Shaw, no Galsworthy, no O'Neill. His one adventure with Shakespeare (*The Merchant of Venice*) was overloaded with pageantry, and Warfield, as "Shylock," ended his career in disappointment.

In the decade after the War, save for *Debureau* which had the old magic of atmosphere and romantic emotion, most of the Belasco productions were comparatively ineffective. The world had changed but he was too old to change with it. On March 15th, 1931 he died.

Belasco had almost no life outside the theatre. All his time, thought and energy to the very end were given up to the creation of plays. A lust for perfection of detail and a pride of accomplishment and place drove him on. His mind grasped all phases of a production, just as his vision saw the whole, and thanks to his years of practical training he was able to realize, as few ever have, the ideal of the theatre—a single intelligence which can create or at least definitely control text, scenery, and lights, can train and direct the players, and can therefore achieve a complete and unique unity. He thus established in our theatre a standard of artistic accomplishment which was tonic and enduring. His instinct, too, early told him that the way to greater illusion for his age led through a better and more artful use of mechanical devices, especially of electric light, and a more careful imitation of nature in acting. He was here a child of his times. Illusion was what he sought and realism pointed the way. Atmosphere must come through realism handled with imagination.

But he had another instinct which must possess every successful theatre artist—the urge to rouse emotional excitement in an audience. Without that the theatre cannot long endure. In most of the plays he staged in his youth and younger middle years that emotion was raised by easily understood "situations." If he had to write a play hastily and throw it on the stage as he so often did he inevitably grabbed situations out of the bag to get his play across. By nature a romantically sentimental man he saw his beloved theatre as a place of escape from drabness and



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in the eager response of audiences to "situation" in a day when the tentative new drama bored or bewildered them he would have found self-justification, had he felt any need for it. The relief of the garrison in *The Girl I Left Behind Me* was not a plagiarism from Boucicault; it was the employment of a tried and true situation, one that in life, indeed, always excites us. The torture scene in *The Darling of the Gods* was not plagiarized from Sardou; it was instinctive use of sure-fire melodrama. When the girl saved her lover by a trick Belasco made her do so because that was the method he knew for exciting and holding an audience. He did not know, and there had been nothing in his past life or education to teach him, that Moody's way was also now possible—the way of internal struggle, not external event. Still less could he grasp the way of Shaw, the way of endowing small stage events with a large social significance. His hand was too subdued to the stuff he had always worked in. His realism remained always one of surface. And *that* he carried to a point of such dramatic effect and beauty that the next step (which he was too old to take) would have been into significant simplification. The drama, even as he reached his prime, was starting to sweep beyond him into a realism deeper than surface. His contrived situations became hollow to us and his plays (save *Madame Butterfly*) have passed away.

But this odd child of the theatre, vainer even than most artists are, who in adult years wore a clerical collar out of sentimental regard for the priests who had schooled him at seven, who surrounded himself in his studio with a clutter of rare objects of art and dim lights and muffled gongs, and was only to be reached after parley with a dozen awestruck lackeys, who in spite of the hardships of his youth and his brave battles in New York for an economic foothold knew little and cared less what was going on in the world outside the playhouse, had a passion for artistic unity and perfection and a capacity for unremitting labor in their attainment which made him one of the most influential men in the entire history of our theatre. He was not influential as a dramatist; neither his early training nor his type



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of intelligence fitted him to grasp post-Ibsen developments. But in most things that concern bringing a drama to life on the modern stage he was pioneer and perfecter; he taught our crude theatre the lesson of detailed discipline; he brought to it mood and atmosphere and sensuous beauty; above all he showed us that to achieve a final effectiveness one guiding intelligence must rule a theatre. He taught us how to unify the diversified arts of the modern playhouse and make them one art.

The drama went beyond him. It has gone, indeed, to a point where emotional excitement and suspense—the life-blood of drama—have often vanished in intellectual debate. I have fancied sometimes as a group of actors talked their way on and on and my mind wandered, that dimly, like Peter Grimm, the shade of a soft-voiced, soft-handed man in a clerical collar, with a heavy lock of gray hair falling across his forehead filtered in from the wings and tried, again like Peter, to "get across." Nobody saw him. Nobody heard him. But I could read his lips.

"My dears, my dears," he was trying to say, "right here a situation, please! Let us go back and try it again."

# Putting the Doctor in the Budget

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AFTER I lectured recently before a large forum on "Medicine and the Changing Social Order" an inquirer in the audience asked, "Am I to understand, doctor, that you would favor collectivization of all other human necessities and insist that medicine alone be supplied on an individual basis?" I answered, "If all the rest of our necessities were supplied on



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a collective basis it is probable that medicine, too, would be furnished in this manner, but I should like to point out that the only nation in which such action has been attempted is Russia, and that in Russia plans are already being made to furnish individual medicine for those who want it and who are willing to pay extra for it. Furthermore, even before such plans were made, individual Russians were already 'bootlegging' a certain amount of individual medical care."

This should indicate that there is something about personal medical service that appeals to human beings and something about human nature which makes collective medical service unsatisfactory. Since time immemorial the relationship between patient and physician has been personal. The doctor has been responsible directly to the patient for giving him the care he needs in time of disease and the patient has been responsible to the doctor for payment. Without doubt this was the perfect system at a time when medicine consisted wholly of general practitioners and when practically all patients were visited in their homes. As medical knowledge has advanced, however, new devices and new methods have made necessary not only specialization but also innumerable chemists, physicists, and technicians associated with the physician in both diagnosis and treatment.

As medical accessories and devices developed it became necessary to have some common place in which they could be assembled for application to the patient and for the physician's use. Consequently the hospital evolved. In 1890 there were less than 1,000 in the United States; today there are 7,000 with some 2,000,000 beds, and of these at least 1,300,000 are for the care of those needing medical or surgical treatment, the remainder being devoted to the tuberculous and those afflicted with mental diseases. Nurses' training schools and, largely as an outgrowth of Florence Nightingale's work, the nursing profession have also advanced by leaps and bounds. In 1890 some 300 nurses graduated from the nurses' training schools; in 1935 there were 22,500. Thus medicine is now a profession engaging the full time of more than 1,250,000 people and including



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135,000 physicians, 150,000 graduate nurses, 100,000 practical nurses, 60,000 pharmacists, innumerable cooks, dietitians, orderlies, hospital record clerks, x-ray technicians, physical therapy technicians, clinical laboratory technicians, hospital librarians, ambulance drivers, and social service workers.

With this labor cost it is not at all surprising that the cost of medical care should have increased considerably in the past fifty years. But while modern medicine costs more it is also worth more.

The work of the industrial physician is one of the most interesting of specialties to develop in the field of medicine. Great industries soon found it worth while to have available in the plant a physician who would render first aid in emergencies and who would also detect disease among those applying for employment. As the employees came to such physicians for emergencies they occasionally called on these doctors in cases of illnesses not associated with employment, and also for their families. Thus some industries began to develop complete medical staffs and hospitals to care for their employees and in some instances to care for the families of employees as well.

In the meantime there had grown up abroad a system of medical care associated with state control. It is true that in many places this system arose as an attempt by the state to allay social unrest. Indeed, an eminent sociologist has said that to economists, philanthropists, sociologists and statesmen free or cheap medical care is the panacea for social unrest. Thus in Germany in 1883 Bismarck offered the German people a system of sickness societies. In Great Britain in 1911, when Lloyd George saw a possibility that Labor might depose the Liberal party, he offered the British people the Panel system for sickness care. Similar systems have grown up in many other foreign countries, so that today most great nations have various forms of insurance or state control of medical care.

But even the most ardent proponents of sickness insurance systems for the United States, or for various forms of state medical care, are frank to admit that no system developed abroad



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can be applied without change to the American people. It must be recognized that the quality of medical practice in the United States today is better than that available throughout the rest of the world. The American citizen would not be satisfied with the type of medical care rendered under the system of the German *Krankenkassen* and would be equally dissatisfied with the kind of service given the peasants of Poland or the farmers of Russia under the system of medical care prevailing in those countries. The American has become accustomed to a personal service and to a quality of medical care not even approximated by any of these foreign systems. The American medical profession in considering the possibility of a change in the nature of medical practice has refused to deal with any system which would involve a depreciation in the quality of service. The morbidity and mortality rates for the United States today are as low as, if not lower than, those of any foreign country of comparable size.

Another factor in the situation involves the gradual concentration of physicians in groups for the rendering of medical service. As early as 1890 medical partnerships were beginning to develop. These would include a surgeon, a general practitioner and perhaps a specialist in diseases of special organs. As laboratory methods and roentgenography developed, these facilities were added to the equipment, and technicians or physicians specializing in these branches became associated with the partnership. Eventually such partnerships became groups of physicians organized under a head, customarily employing young physicians or technicians on salaries to render certain services out of the fields of the partners in the group. The logical outgrowth of this development was the organization of such groups as corporations, with stock held by various members of the group and by some physicians serving as employees of the corporation, the profits of the corporation being distributed according to the ownership of the stock. Today there are some 600 such groups practicing in the United States, usually associated with hospitals in which the members of the group hold staff appointments.

The increasing cost of medical care associated with the ad-



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vancement in medical knowledge, the change in the nature of medical practice, and the increasing demands on the family purse already described led to a critical situation which in the years of depression became more critical. Several committees and commissions were therefore established to study the problem. The Committee on the Costs of Medical Care rendered a majority report which recommended that all medical service should be reorganized around the hospital and that practice should be administered by groups of physicians on salaries, and under an organization much like the military organization in its conception. A minority report objected to any formulation of medical care along such lines and emphasized the need for a personal relationship between doctor and patients as the supreme essential in medical care. The Commission on Medical Education pointed out that 85 per cent of the conditions for which people consult doctors can be treated by a good medical practitioner with the equipment he can carry in a handbag, and the remaining 15 per cent require hospitalization and the attention of specialists. Actually the rewards of specialization are such that from 40 to 50 per cent of our physicians specialize or limit themselves partially to certain branches of medical service. Moreover, the ease of care in the hospital is such that there is an increasing tendency to hospitalization.

As part of their appeal to the medical profession for reorganization on a group basis the proponents of group systems, of state medicine, and of similar methods of practice urge that the physician of today is inadequately remunerated for his services and that a change in the present system would give far more physicians a better income. It is pointed out that a certain percentage in the upper strata receive great incomes and that a tremendous number, perhaps 33 per cent of the total group in the lower strata, receive hardly a living income. It is suggested that organization under a state system or under any of the other systems that have been mentioned would guarantee the physicians in the lower income group at least a salary of $3,000 to $4,000 a year. This argument has not appealed particularly to the medical pro-



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fession because it is recognized that such systems destroy initiative, promote laziness, permit inadequate and insufficient service, and tend altogether to depreciate the quality of medical care. It is argued instead that still further improvement in the training of the physician and a lowering of the total number will permit the majority to earn adequate incomes.

When state medicine is mentioned one realizes that various grades are possible. Thus all physicians might be employed by the national or state governments, medical service administered through state bureaus, physicians assigned to patients and patients assigned to physicians by state control, and a service rendered much the same as that rendered today in education. This is essentially the system practiced in Russia, but it is doubtful that few, if any, Americans would care for it. Another gradation would involve the maintenance of private practice for people in the higher income levels and the assignment of this state system to those in the middle or lower income levels. Strangely enough where such systems prevail people in the lower income levels are willing to save toward private medical practice, and in Russia as I have already pointed out, there is at present some bootlegging of private medical practice.

Sickness insurance systems vary according to the nation in which they have been developed. It is significant that there is no country in which the system now prevailing is considered suitable, and all are in constant state of evolution and change. The Panel system in Great Britain, obviously the one that might be most nearly adapted to the American people, does not take care of patients in the very conditions which most concern us, namely in obstetrical cases and emergencies with long hospitalization and a considerable bill. The Panel system takes care of only ordinary illnesses and the patient who requires emergency medical care must go on charity.

It is therefore evident that some means must be developed whereby money will be available for the majority of the people for medical care. State-controlled systems of medical service are unsatisfactory, since they depreciate the quality of medical care,



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inhibit research, and take from medicine the personal factor fundamental to good medical care. Compulsory sickness insurance systems are unsatisfactory because of the great burden of administrative cost, political interference in the administration of service, and a tendency to lower the quality of medical care. For a democratic people the ideal system is obviously one in which the citizens would be encouraged to save toward medical costs, and whereby physicians would be encouraged to organize the administration of service on a high plane, with the understanding that the cost would be met voluntarily by those who use the service—the present tendency in the United States.

Several hundred county medical societies and similar bodies have developed plans such as the Wayne County plan in Detroit, the Alameda County plan in California, and the District of Columbia plan, which enable the citizen to meet the cost of medical care and still to receive the type of medical service he has had in the past. The American medical profession, as represented by its organization, prefers experimentation along such lines and gradual evolution in the administration of medical service to revolutionary changes inherent in establishing a state system. The District of Columbia plan involves a setup whereby the medical society, the social service organizations and the community chest combine in studying the credit of those who develop large medical bills and permit these bills to be paid at an adjusted rate by the installment plan. There are other plans under which the individual who anticipates an obstetrical or surgical bill may lay aside a certain sum of money each week in advance of the procedure, thus being able to meet his costs when they develop.

It has been argued that many Americans are unable to get medical care, yet those who base their plea for socialized medicine on this argument fail invariably to point out that the advancement in living since 1900 has placed new demands on the American purse. Motor cars, automotive parts, motion pictures, radios, candy, confectionery, ice cream, cosmetics, and tobacco are new demands that press for immediate payment while the



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need for medical care may seem to the citizen something far in the future. Moreover, the use of advertising and propaganda, coupled with the development of installment buying, have caused innumerable people to invest in the accessories of life rather than in medical or dental care.

And people no longer fear disease. When life expectancy at birth was 45 years and infant mortality 275 per thousand, when the rate for tuberculosis was 300 per hundred thousand, and when infectious diseases were exceedingly prevalent human beings lived constantly in the fear of illness and death. Today life expectancy at birth is 60 years. Our morbidity rates have all been tremendously lowered, and both illness and death seem exceedingly remote.

If a technic similar to that of installment buying were applied to the sale of medical and dental care it seems reasonable to believe that many more people would arrange to provide themselves with these accessories to happiness. Yet sociologists and economists insist that Americans cannot be trusted to purchase for themselves, that we must introduce a compulsory system which will force the wage earner to set aside money against sickness and which, by increasing taxation, will take from the employer enough additional money to meet the public need.

Certain writers maintain that medical service is more widespread abroad than in this country and that fewer people are denied such service, but they do not point out that innumerable medical visits and calls abroad are wasted, that people tend to malinger when the rendering of medical service is uncontrolled, and that sickness and death rates abroad are in few, if any, instances as good as those here. Some also maintain that the American Medical Association has been bitter in its opposition to compulsory sickness insurance and to voluntary hospital insurance, whereas actually the Association has encouraged experimentation with new plans for rendering medical service, merely insisting that those factors the medical profession has found essential for maintaining the quality of the service be safeguarded in any new experiment.



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# The Permanence of Robert Frost

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FEW things are more foolish than a prophecy that some living poet's fame will last. History at once brings up the names of Cowley, Phineas Fletcher, Samuel Rogers, and the rest—gentlemen whose reputations seemed not only great but secure, not only wide but deep—and reminds us how little we now remember of them beyond their names. Yet criticism cannot dodge the responsibility which prophecies of this sort involve. For an assertion that the writer will live is after all an assertion that he is valuable at the present moment for reasons which can be given, for qualities which can be recognized. And the critic may therefore be pardoned for asking posterity to agree with him concerning these qualities. It will or it will not, as it likes. Meanwhile he has done all that he can do if he has taken the full dare which fate delights in offering mankind. He has said all that can be said for the time being. And if he has done that he has indulged in prophecy. Such is the nature of criticism.

In the case of Robert Frost there is nothing, obviously, to be argued from the fact that he has been a famous poet for twenty years. Twenty years is little enough when we consider the length of immortality. Nor is there anything beyond a biographical significance to be found in the further fact that the twenty years in Mr. Frost's case represent the third twenty of his life. He spent his second twenty in an obscure effort to become known—even to reach any readers at all, for the magazines and the publishing houses were closed to him. It is only between his fortieth and his sixtieth years that he has been read, known, and admired. And this is gratifying, doubtless to him quite as much as to his



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admirers. But it does not necessarily mean that the reward thus slowly reaped is to be an enduring one.

A surer ground for prophecy is the middle ground he occupies in the present poetical scene. Mr. Frost's place is and always has been singularly central. He has had nothing to do with the extremes where most of our shouting has been heard. His range has been great enough to carry him close to all the corners, yet he has never quite crossed any line. He has always, in a kind of silence and with a most remarkable integrity, kept to his center. So has the criticism of him kept there, and so has his reputation. The result is a solidity of position almost unique in poetry today. It is not perfectly unique, since the position of Edwin Arlington Robinson is something like it. But of the solidity itself there has never been any doubt—or of the further important fact that this thing which may be called Mr. Frost's safety is not the consequence of compromise. There is an ignoble way of avoiding extremes. It is the way of being nobody and of saying nothing; of never, at any rate, being or saying quite enough to count. But there is another way which, difficult though it may be to define, is the only way worth considering. It consists in occupying or touching both extremes at once, and inhabiting all the space between. It consists in being capable of excess while actually achieving more than excess achieves. It consists in finding that golden mean which, far from signifying that the extremes have been avoided, signifies that they have been enclosed and contained. To say this of any poet is of course to praise him very highly. But it is also to predict that he has a good chance of being read beyond his time. The object of the present article is not to praise Mr. Frost, but to discover some basis for a prediction that he will continue for a long while to be felt as an important poet. The basis hoped for is this middle ground, this central position, which has been surveyed.

It means among other things that he has several audiences, that he can be appreciated on various levels. If he is not all things to all men he is something to almost anybody—to posterity, one supposes, as well as to us. And the clearest sign of this so far is



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that from the beginning he has enjoyed the devotion both of the professional and of the lay reader, both of the expert in poetry and of the person who simply likes what he likes for some unnamable human reason. It is difficult to think of a contemporary poet who has kept the allegiance of more schools. He was first hailed, for instance, by Ezra Pound in London. The burden of praise was taken up within a year by Amy Lowell in Boston and New York. And no critic since that day—it was twenty years ago—has been so fastidious about the very finest and most specialized things of poetry as to find himself "beyond" Robert Frost. The guests at Mr. Frost's fiftieth birthday dinner 11 years ago included, in addition to many persons who could not have been considered literary at all, representatives of every conceivable fashion in criticism. Mr. Frost has always been a poet for the few at the same time that "North of Boston" has become the entertainment of thousands. These are significant facts, for they place the poet in the highest possible company. Something like this must be true of any poet before he can legitimately be listed among the great ones. He must be interesting to anyone; he must also, however, fascinate the sophisticated. He must seem to be possessed of arts the very definition of which, by those sufficiently trained to perceive them, induces a sense of bewilderment in the minds of those others who merely and naively enjoy him. Their naive enjoyment, too, must have as its object the result—that is, the poetry—which these arts have unostentatiously produced. They only know that they like the poet in question and like him in some degree which is mysterious. The critic exists to tell them why; if he can. At any rate, there must be something for the critic to talk about.

Mr. Frost was a "modern" poet in 1914 when "North of Boston" appeared in this country after twenty years during which nothing of his had been known. And it might have been expected that he would experience at least some of the difficulty which other "modern" poets have faced before they could be recognized. For the one thing which all new poets possess in common is strangeness. Such poets do not seem to their first readers to



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be writing poetry at all. And some of them, indeed, are not. But some of them are, and it usually takes several years for the world to find this out. Mr. Frost had his strangeness, too, and for all anyone knows there may still be many persons who would declare him no poet because of it. In general, however, he has met with remarkably little resistance. His strangeness consisted, and still consists, in the conversational tone he builds into his verse. His poems are said, not sung; his poems are people talking. If this cannot be poetry, then Mr. Frost is no poet. If it can be poetry, Mr. Frost has supplied the proof. And he has been the only one to do so, despite the fact that almost every American poet younger than he has tried to imitate him. Coming upon the scene with a gift which not everyone was capable of acknowledging as the gift of a poet for the reason that it had never been the gift of one before, he has ended by establishing it as one of the gifts most easy to recognize, however impossible it may be to achieve. This is still another sign not only of his originality but of his genuineness. For no two good poets are alike in any other respect than that they are good. No one of them ever explains another.

Mr. Frost has an amusing story to tell in this connection. Some time during the dark years he sent a number of his poems to a friend for criticism, saying that the magazines would not have them but that they might be worth some one's reading anyhow, and asked the friend to discuss them frankly. The friend's report was that they did not seem to him to be poetry. If he were asked what they did seem to be he would have to say: Conversation. Mr. Frost, far from being discouraged, knew that he had found out something. His poems had one quality at least. They sounded like something. There was something in them that could be named. So he said to himself: I will develop this quality until it becomes not my weakness but my strength; I will prove that conversation can *be* poetry. And that is precisely what he has done. His characteristic line is the spoken, not the singing one, and whenever he presents any difficulty to the reader the reason is right there. Not a few of his lines, in fact,



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are unintelligible until they are heard by the conversing ear of the reader. For instance this one:

Before we met and you what I had passed.

It is necessary to approach this line in its context if one is to know that it means: "Before we met and you had passed what I had passed." As the concluding line of a sonnet called "Meeting and Passing" it compresses into itself the whole meaning of the thirteen lines that have gone before it and seems, indeed, in its very compression to partake of the quality which most distinguishes human speech at its best. For the man who talks under the name of Robert Frost knows how to say a great deal in a short space, just as the many men and women whom he has listened to in New England and elsewhere have known how to express in the few words they use more truth than volumes of rhetoric can express. Another line from another poem is unintelligible in still another sense:

As that I can see no way out but through.

Here we have not only compression, which disappears when we read the line as one of four:

Len says one steady pull more ought to do it.
He says the best way out is always through.
And I agree to that, or in so far
As that I can see no way out but through.

We have also a lack of accent, a lack which disappears as soon as we hear all that the woman says—she is afraid, by the way, that she will go insane unless she extracts herself from a certain state of mind—and hear her place a strong but natural emphasis upon the word "but" in that otherwise perplexing line. Here our perplexity was, perhaps, that we could not see how Mr. Frost could have presumed to call the line in question a blank verse line. It did not sound like one, certainly, until we heard this woman saying it. But then it did, as every one of Mr. Frost's



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blank verse lines does in the same circumstances, the tendency coming to a famous climax in the two definitions of home that are spoken in "The Death of the Hired Man":

> "Home is the place where, when you have to go there,
> They have to take you in."
> "I should have called it
> Something you somehow haven't to deserve."

In the first of these lines it must be plain that the only cue to the reading of the words "where, when" is the cue of the voice; as in the last line only the voice, pausing in the midst of speech, can direct the reader how to say "somehow" three or four times as slowly as he says "something."

Now this "difficulty" in Mr. Frost is something for which the specialists in poetry admired him at the beginning of his career. It was also, however, something which made his more general audience love him. For once, then, a poet's particular quality was no barrier to his communication. That is one thing which was meant a while back by the assertion that he occupied a middle ground. Another thing that might have been meant is this. He, like perhaps any other poet today who has received critical acclaim, is something of a Symbolist. He deals, that is to say, in indirection. The thing he seems to be talking about is never quite the thing he means to be talking about. He selects an object, an animal, a person, a life, or whatever other thing he likes, and makes it a symbol of something else which is larger or deeper than itself, so that as we read him we seem to see behind or through his subject matter, and derive a pleasure from so doing. Yet here again Mr. Frost has not suffered the common penalty —which is that the poet, retreating ever and ever from us into a world of his own experience, a world whose light is all shadowy with reflected meanings, becomes in the end unintelligible and writes only for himself. Mr. Frost is as skilful a Symbolist as anyone, and his critics acknowledge that this is so; but the mystery in his poems is never of the sort which makes so many contemporary poems sound like puzzles. It is merely the mystery



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which there is in all existence and which he has his own personal way of feeling. Just as his untrained readers have enjoyed hearing the voice of his verse because it is a singularly human voice, so they have enjoyed the additional and deeper layers of meaning which underlie all his apparently simple pieces. It is not that nothing is clear. The surface is as clear as daybreak. It is that the things which are unclear are the things which elsewhere in the world are unclear—in all our life, no less. The poem called "The Runaway" is a perfect picture, merely on the level of photography, of a young colt escaped from its mother in a snowstorm. It is also, though there are no words in it which say this, a complete reminder of a universe full of young, lost things, of a universe in which every creature, indeed, lives touchingly and amusingly alone. And there is no human being alive who would miss this in the poem. At the same time it is one of the most ingenious exercises in Symbolism produced by any poet during half a century, whether in France, in England, or in America.

The Symbolists have been on the whole shy and special souls, somewhat withdrawn from the common path. Something about the modern world has brought it about that its poets are by and large its least wise and sensible persons. Mr. Frost has his shynesses; he tells us he has turned his back on most of the United States; he is constantly threatening the minor note; and yet he has never spoken with anything less complete than the human voice at its ripest and wisest. He is romantic, granted; but he knows the world and knows therefore whereof he speaks—why he doesn't like most of it, why he likes the portions of it he does like, and why in the most general sense he is what he is. An early poem in his earliest volume, *A Boy's Will*, put this feeling in a fairly callow form; yet even there the theme had its connection with the larger world, its roots in life.

> One of my wishes is that those dark trees,
> So old and firm they scarcely show the breeze,
> Were not, as 'twere, the merest mask of gloom,
> But stretched away unto the edge of doom.



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I should not be withheld but that some day
Into their vastness I should steal away,
Fearless of ever finding open land,
Or highway where the slow wheel pours the sand.

I do not see why I should e'er turn back,
Or those should not set forth upon my track
To overtake me, who should miss me here
And long to know if still I held them dear.

They would not find me changed from him they knew—
Only more sure of what I thought was true.

Escape here is not a sentiment; it is a fact, and the man who speaks of it is not in so doing a pretty fool of the sort we are used to. He has seen the world—the eighth line alone would prove that—and has accepted it. He is not leaving it, actually. He is only taking this way to describe it and comment upon it. So, years later, Mr. Frost in his *New Hampshire* was to talk at considerable length—it is much his longest poem—about the absurdities of modern society. But there again he was not to damn something which he somehow wasn't up to understanding. He had been through it and was now on the other side of it; his criticism was mature. Any quaintness in the poem, too, was more than quaintness; it was the peculiar twist of a seasoned and of course not quite symmetrical character. *New Hampshire*, in other words, carried conviction, as Mr. Frost's poems always do, no matter how personal and particular they sound. When, for another instance, he says that there is nothing new under the sun—nothing at least worth wondering about—he seems neither to be speaking a commonplace nor to be evading the human responsibility to "keep up."

New is a word for fools in town who think
Style upon style in dress and thought at last
Must get somewhere.

For, dear me, why abandon a belief
Merely because it ceases to be true.



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Cling to it long enough, and not a doubt
It will turn true again, for so it goes.
Most of the change we think we see in life
Is due to truths being in and out of favor.

These for him are no light sayings. They are the truth, for him; they have that sound.

The last of his dualities is by no means the least important, though it must be stated briefly. He is a New England poet, perhaps the New England poet, and reaps all the advantage there is in being true to a particular piece of earth—true to its landscape, its climate, its history, its morality, its tongue. But he is in the same breath a poet of and for the world. One need not have lived in New England to understand him. He has induced, it happens, a nostalgia for New England in persons who never saw the place. But what is of greater consequence, his voice is immediately recognizable anywhere as a human voice, and recognizable for the much that it has to say. He has his roots, as literature must always have them; but he grows at the top into the wide air that flows around the world where men and women listen.

A Tree in Robert Frost's Orchard

Headpiece for *A Victorian Village;* courtesy of the artist and of the publisher, Farrar and Rinehart



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# Mexico in Evolution

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TO the student of political science, Mexico offers a laboratory experiment of the greatest interest, conducted more visibly to us than any similar process in Europe. It differs at many points from the European processes. In Russia, in Germany, in Italy and in Turkey, the word experiment connotes (at least in some degree) a conscious, orderly synthesis for the purpose of arriving at an intended or expected result. That connotation is certainly not wholly true of Mexico. The only thing quite certain about Mexico is that there is an immense urge, an immense surging desire; a boiling and bubbling of something in the national laboratory retort—but it is not certain that the experimenters truly know what they want to achieve by what they are doing, beyond intense emphasis on recognition of something supremely "Indian" with the fullest possible outlet for some vague thing coming to be called "Indianism."

Just what this "Indianism" is and means is important. It is important for United States diplomatists to know whether it means anything definite; whether it is anything beyond a blind rejection of all "white" influence and culture, becoming thereby a part of what is happening in Asia and Africa; or whether it is mainly a racket of cynical opportunists making personal fortunes out of a fostered popular movement. Without exact knowledge it is impossible to conduct a sane diplomacy or to be a "good neighbor."

Consciousness of this Indian background is essential to understanding the flux and reflux of mutually exclusive political tendencies which followed (during the 19th century) the separation of Mexico from the Spanish Empire in 1810. It is vital to understanding why all this political liquidity crystallized (in the past eighteen years) into rejection of the essence of all Eu-



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ropean theories, old or new, while preserving for convenience' sake the outward shell of a Republic of federated States.

It gives a clue also to the theory accompanying the present stage of Mexican evolution: that religion must be exterminated by law if the new State is to exist. In no other way could one understand how, in the face of a religious majority, anti-religious laws can be enacted and enforced. If one understands Mexico to be today what it always has been—not a nation but a ruling class in a non-political Indian mass—the interpretation is simple. The new State form, with its positivist and anti-religious ideology, is being forced upon a bewildered and partly unwilling people even more truly than were any of those things against which the revolution is supposedly directed. The anti-religious part of the new platform is wrapped up, for the Indian, partly in a fostered racial (anti-"white") antipathy, partly in an agrarian "share the wealth" program; these and the centering of attention upon his educational needs flatter the Indian into swallowing the drive against religion.

Before studying this experiment in State building, it is necessary to see what, exactly, Mexico was at three particularly important dates: at the time of the Conquest; at the time of separation from the Spanish Empire; and at the time of the Agrarian Revolution of 1910–1917.

Mexico's Spanish beginning was not by settlement among nomad tribes (like our beginning) but by conquest of cultured city populations not unlike the Moors in Spain. There are today in Mexico more than 200 different Indian language groups, some high in the human category—some very low as types. Even at the time of the Spanish Conquest they had not all been brought into unity with the ruling people, the Aztecs. The Conquest took place by revolution and politics more than by a war victory. The small body of Spanish invaders succeeded in detaching one Indian people after another from the so-called Aztec Confederation and in pushing Indian revolutionary armies ahead of them, as "allies," in their attack on the Capital and seat of central government. The Spaniards proceeded then to add Mexico



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to the growing Spanish Empire as an *Indian* (not as a *Spanish*) unit. It is the Spaniard's preservation of Indian integrity which has resulted in what may be an Indian Renaissance and the exclusion from it of the "white" Spaniard. It seems a little unreasonable to condemn the Spaniard for that.

There have been several important political handicaps to orderly evolution which should be noted in this briefest possible outline of the Conquest. Politically, Mexico was never either a unit or a real voluntary union; revolution has been a constant phenomenon in Mexican history, as far back as there is any authentic history of Mexico. Not only was the Aztec Confederation unstable, not only did the Spanish conquest begin by revolution, but after Cortez had superseded the native rulers by putting himself and his followers in their places (leaving everything else in native government more or less as it had always been) revolution continued from two sources: from new leaders and their bands coming to the New World and disputing Viceregal authority—and from the native tribal populations, restless under Spanish rule as they had been under the Aztec.

These two constant factors in Mexican history (which together constitute the first historical handicap) must be kept in mind: a restless political unity based on force, and frequent revolutionary outbreaks against it. The first continued throughout the three centuries of the Spanish vice-royalty. The second changed during the 18th century, from personal challenges to central authority or from native insurrections, to a Mexican "white" "native-born" (creole) challenge to Spanish-born Crown officials, which again changed after 1910 to an Indian, "anti-white" movement. Today "Mexican" means "Indian" and nothing else.

After this Creole challenge had succeeded in separating Mexico from Spain in 1810–1821 the whole of the next century (1810 to 1910) was taken up, politically, with personal attempts by outstanding men to unify Mexico positively. These efforts manifested themselves by a long series of personal revolutions and counter-revolutions. During the whole of this 19th



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century the "native-born" challenge swung between an alignment of Mexico with European (never with North American) civilization, and a disintegration back to native tribal Indianism. During the 36 years of Porfirio Diaz' domination of Mexican life (1873 to 1909) he seemed to have succeeded in making Mexico definitely European, but with all the fundamental flaws of European industrial finance-capitalism (of which Porfirio Diaz knew nothing at all) which form the paramount problem of our civilization today.

Financially, with an excellent national credit, Diaz' Europeanization of Mexico was still further complicated by our own American system of monopolies, through Mexican concessions granted to American capital. Our own diplomacy, having forced this condition on Mexico, is now engaged in ignoring its consequences instead of in helping to rectify them.

The second grave handicap to orderly progress is made up of two serious constitutional discrepancies. The whole Mexican constitutional system is false from the start. Because of the majority Indian population, constitution-making has of necessity always been undertaken by a white or part-white minority. The successive constitutions of Mexico have always represented, therefore, the party ideas of a minority, not in any way a guarantee of the personal rights or liberties of the people as a whole. The majority has always been left out. The essence of constitutional government is lacking.

The form of the government is also fatal. In their revolutionary and Republican ardor against the Crown of Spain the first Mexican constitution-makers took as their model *our* Constitution, which did not fit and does not fit their conditions or aspirations. At the moment when a group of men in the United States drafted a Constitution and offered it to the states for acceptance and ratification we were in fact an American League of Nations. Our states were attempting (some of them with strong misgivings) to unite permanently in such a way as to strengthen our whole continental life internally and protect our joint life against external aggression while safe-guarding and protecting to a



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maximum degree the basic rights, liberties, and duties of the individual citizen as well as the political entity of each state. Spanish Mexico, on the contrary, was and always had been a Viceroyalty of the Crown, a theoretical political unit with a considerable amount of municipal self-government and a considerable amount of centrifugal pulling and a constant factor of revolutionary tendency—often active, sometimes only smouldering beneath the surface. No constitution, in all the series of Mexican constitutions, has ever been more than the imposition of a minority will or a party ideology upon an unwilling (or non-understanding) majority. No Mexican constitution has ever worked. That has been a serious matter for Mexico; it has confused all domestic issues and has had its serious effects on us, for it has confused our own diplomacy. Although many Americans are losing their respect for it, constitutional government is still officially sacred to us. As a matter of principle we support even the appearance of constitutional government in Mexico. We have gone so far as to support the appearance even against those Mexicans who would make it real. Today we are supporting a party which is destroying religion for the majority, against the majority which wants the same religious liberty which we hold to be a sacred right. The result is disastrous to a good neighbor policy.

With the two foregoing serious obstacles to orderly progress Mexico entered the 20th century and bore along into a new scheme of life a third and even more serious handicap—the religious situation.

In spite of a too facile imitation of our constitutional forms by Mexico we pay ourselves, I think, an unmerited and excessive compliment by assuming that we have ever influenced Mexican thought. French and other European publicists today are over-eager to put upon us the responsibility for Mexico's alleged "radical" ideas which have made Mexicans now "an easy prey to Moscow." They claim this nefarious influence of ours has been exercised by the Masonic Orders operating through our diplomatic representatives for the purpose (encouraged by our



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State Department) of breaking down the Catholic Church and of uprooting the Catholic religion in favor of Protestantism. Sufficient color has been given to that extravagant notion by many of our representatives in earlier days and by some of our official policies in later days, for some of our own editors and writers to believe it. Personally I see nothing intentional in it on our part; merely half-baked diplomacy. I cannot see why any European should believe that we have had such a policy or anyone else who knows anything of the effect of French and Spanish thought on the successor states to the Spanish Empire in South America.

Certainly no Spaniard could possibly be unconscious of the effect on these new American Republics of the "Free Thought" of 18th and 19th century France filtered to them through Spanish writers, long before the activities of our peripatetic unofficial observer, Joel Poinsett; or of the "Barcelona School" of revolutionary thought in the 20th century; or the effect of Spanish anarchists' theories of life brought personally to Cuba and Mexico by refugees from Spain. No Spaniard could be unaware that the effect of Ferrer's ideas upon portions of the current Mexican program is much more clearly visible than that of Moscow. I could be very much inclined to believe that Moscow's public impatience and disgust with Mexico (as being incapable of assimilating Moscow's dogma in its purity) is quite real—and not merely assumed before the world in order to cover some intense and successful subterranean activity.

It is absolutely essential to bear in mind the whole of Spanish radical influence in Mexico in order to discuss intelligently the important factor of the condition of the Catholic Church and of religion in Mexico's affairs. That is, as I have suggested, the third of the great handicaps with which Mexico entered the 20th century: the constant revolutionary element inherent in the whole system from the very beginning; the false constitutional basis of government, inconsistent with the genius of the Mexican people; the condition in which the Church entered the long struggle for a definite new social order.

In order to understand the position of religion we must once



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more go back to Spain. The conquerors were not only men of the Renaissance. They were a peculiar type of Catholic. As Catholics they were men professing a religion of peace; of love of God and neighbor. As Spaniards they had just emerged victorious from a war with the African Moorish invaders and the religion of Mahomet. That war had been practically continuous for some 700 years. It produced a definite and unique type of man. The reasons for which expeditionary forces were encouraged by the Crown to leave Spain and invade Mexico and other parts of the Continent were definite. Spain needed national unity. Warriors trained in seven centuries of war were a disturbing factor in the new civilian State. Spain needed to take equal place with those other new nations of Europe in which land as the feudal measure of wealth had given way to gold as the commercial and bourgeois measure of wealth.

England, France, the Netherlands had created the new wealth-standard by commerce. Spain had to reach a short cut to equality by direct access to the source of gold. Spanish "greed for gold," so heavily emphasized in current text-books, was a natural and intelligible State policy. The disturbing warrior factor in the new civilian State could be used to great advantage in the conquest of gold-producing portions of the newly discovered continent and for the founding of an American Spanish Empire, based on the native Indian peoples. These conquests were given the appearance of Crusades. Spanish warriors in the wars with Moors had fought and killed "for Christ" against "Godless pagans." They continued to do so in Mexico. Their remote descendants (the "Cristeros") continued in 1926 to fight and kill "for Christ" against a "Godless" government. That is, today, the hold which the National Revolutionary Party's government has upon the clergy. In 1926 some priests joined up with the "Cristero" bands as chaplains or even as leaders. The government holds that as a sword over their heads now—regardless of the fact that several of the great Mexican national heroes were priests who sided with the revolution against the Crown a century earlier, in 1821.



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With the first expeditions and the conquest there were two kinds of priests, and these became integrally a part of the evolution of Spanish government in Mexico. The army chaplains were rough and ready friars, more used to camp life and forays than to monasteries or sedate parish routine. Quite different were the great clerical educators, scholars, linguists and missionaries, to whom we owe everything we know of Mexican antiquity and its languages and customs; to whom the Mexican Indian owes his preservation. These latter stood always between the Indian and military or civilian oppression. They stood always for the elevation of the Indian and for his education. No Mexican scholar claims otherwise—though revolutionary propagandists must belittle or deny it today, to be consistent. This part of the clergy found powerful backing in the Crown and, generally, in the Council of the Indies. Special privileges concerning the clergy were granted by Rome to the Spanish Crown, and in turn special political and other privileges were granted to the clergy by the Crown to facilitate their spiritual work. Some of these privileges made them an integral part of government. Accepted at first as an asset, their privileged position has turned out to be their greatest disadvantage and liability. In particular, *privileges* granted by Rome to the Spanish Crown with regard to the appointment of bishops were claimed as *rights* by the new Republican government.

During the whole of the 18th century, land allotted to the clergy for their support naturally increased in value. Clerical life advanced from hardship to comfort; from comfort to luxury. *Unpaid* (not *slave*) Indian labor (a privilege held by the clergy in common with the other high social classes) resulted eventually in the inclusion of the clergy in the general "oppressor" class with the landlords and other "capitalists" when modern revolutionary ideology and vocabulary began to take form.

With the development of luxury, mission zeal slackened. Disputations on doctrinal subjects took its place and led to factional hostilities and jealousies, dissensions and enmities among the Orders or between bishops and sections of the clergy. An-



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other strong factor affecting religion in Mexico was the tribunal of the Inquisition. That is a fact, but not in the way it is generally described. Cruel as its Spanish operation often was (so cruel in Spain as to bring on certain bishops and judges the excommunication of Popes) it is not by the cruelty of its operation that it affected society most seriously in America. The great harm it did was rather in the discouragement of open thought. Wherever the Inquisition existed in Spanish countries, even where it was not cruel or where it rarely operated or never functioned actively, its general effect was blighting to free discussion of religious matters *among the laity*. Its mere existence militated against the development of a well-informed, understanding, positive and outspoken laity. That would explain the puzzling lack of voluntary support of the clergy so frequently noted by American writers during the periods of active persecution in Mexico, and too lightly ascribed by some of them to a lingering atavistic paganism. All those things brought the Church into the revolutions of the 19th century totally unprepared to take its proper and constructive place.

The clergy entered the new century linked by force of circumstances with the Royal government (the unpopular party) since the clergy was one of the privileged classes in the old régime. During the first half of the hundred years from 1810 to 1910 the revolutionary republicans strove to disestablish the Church and to abolish all special privileges. The interested classes—the clergy among them—strove to preserve or restore them. Politically, a large share of party activity concerned the election of deputies who would be in favor of—or against—class privilege. When confiscation of Church property followed, a new grievance was added. The clergy, a part of government before 1810, became inextricably bound up in party politics for decades after that date.

Educationally (during this period of struggle) emphasis was laid more frequently on building up a clerical party in the schools and universities than upon the place and function of religion in the new political and social order. The conflict resulted



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in the suppression of the teaching orders and the exile of many of their most active members. The Church became a subject of constitutional provision and legislation. Leading families began to send their sons abroad for adequate education.

Entering the 19th century badly shaken, the Church entered the 20th century thoroughly disorganized. In the first half of those hundred years more and more men had become anti-clerical; in the second half more and more men anti-religious.

The agrarian revolution of 1910 swept away all semblance of an ordered State when it swept out Porfirio Diaz' attempt to Europeanize Mexico. There grew to maturity in the next seven years men who had never known an ordered society, who had never known religion, who had never had personal contact with priest or clergyman of any kind. The National Revolutionary Party is full of such men, and they supplied a ready seed bed for the ideologies brought to them by the new young rebel intellectuals of their universities *and of ours*. A third element in the Party is composed of older men—men who were the outlaws and public enemies, train or bank robbers of the Diaz régime; men who, having a handy group of gunmen at their bidding in 1910, rose to eminence as military chieftains in the next seven years. Those of them who survived are now leading politicians in their States, political bosses and generals. A fourth group in the Party, probably the largest, is made up of all those prudent men who have bowed before the storm and have sought shelter and safety where alone it is to be found—in the orthodoxy of the only party permitted to exist. And there are also in it an excessive number of plunderers; the usual buzzards and vultures of social battlefields.

The National Revolutionary Party is a curious organism. It is not Communist or Fascist; nor is it to be understood as being precisely like Hitler's Nazi party or the laic state of France though it has certain appearances of all these. It is a living thing and it possesses a germ of definite objective. It has a tendency toward some sort of order—enough to make the diverse elements within it cohere. It is the first orderly society that most



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of its junior members have ever seen. Anything, therefore, which disturbs it is repelled with all the fierce energies engendered by a still fresh revolutionary psychology.

Its principal support is the American diplomacy which maintains it in power. The disturbing obstacle to its unhindered development is not the white race, against which the Indian revolt is ever more clearly defined. It is not what is left in Mexico of the dispossessed great land-owners or industrialists, many of whom would gladly go along with the reform program. The great obstacle to the totalitarian form into which Mexico is crystallizing is still the local Catholic Church.

Stripped of all material possessions, outlawed and prohibited by law, the Mexican Church today is more powerful than it has been in two centuries. It is today the power of the spirit which is in issue with a purely materialistic State. For the first time in a century Mexican lay Catholics are as eager as the new Indian clergy to face this issue. Inexperience alone hampers renaissance. And that is a definite state of mind for statesmen to consider in State building.

Here, at this point, enters a supreme paradox. Most of the points apparently at issue between Church and State in the program of revolutionary social reforms are points on which the Church could not only cooperate with the State but could lead. There are points in the program which, far from being antipathetic to Catholic doctrine, are entirely consonant with the Papal Encyclicals from Leo XIII to the present Pope; in essence they are in line with Aquinian philosophy, the accepted philosophy of the Catholic Church. The issue is artificial.

The reform program, for example, lays major stress on the redistribution of land. Economists and agricultural scientists are not in agreement whether national wealth based on tropical agriculture can best be developed upon large or upon small units. Catholic thought, however, is definite on that point. The widest possible distribution of individual ownership comes nearer than any present system to the application of Catholic philosophy to economics, and this is true of industry as well as of agriculture.



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The other vital point in the revolutionary program concerns education. The constitution and laws require the following:

(*a*) "a rational and exact concept of the universe and of social life." There is no incompatibility here, in wording, with Catholic doctrine. "An exact concept" is, however, very wide open to discussion. It is not a proper subject of legislation; hardly a thing to be included in a Constitution.

(*b*) education "shall combat fanaticism and prejudice." There is no incompatibility here. Neither fanaticism nor prejudice (nor superstition) is compatible with Catholic doctrine. All are excrescences upon Catholicism.

(*c*) education shall be a monopoly of the State.

(*d*) "education imparted by the State shall be:
(1) socialistic" and
(2) "*shall exclude all religious doctrines.*"

Here, of course, in this second provision, is the issue.

It is an error to set it down as parallel with our own concepts of education. Teaching of religious doctrine is also excluded from the American public school system; therefore Catholics can assent to our public school system only as long as private schools exist and are free to teach doctrinal religion.

Our situation works smoothly only because our public schools were not founded with any intent to destroy religion. They were founded in the intention of being entirely impartial as between religious creeds. It is a by-product of that attempt that they do tend to destroy religion in great measure.

That is precisely the issue between advocates of laic education and believers in revealed religion. Whether laic or believer, however, most Americans hold that the problem must be worked out within the constitutional liberties of free citizens and that a partisan decision on one side or the other cannot be imposed by government. Still less may government compel school teachers (as in Mexico) to counteract religious doctrinal teaching given to the child elsewhere. For us the issue boils down to a categorical answer to the question: "do inalienable human rights



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exist, or do they not?" and "is religion one of them?" We still answer in the affirmative. The Mexican revolutionary program abolishes the corporate existence, not only of the Catholic Church, but of all ecclesiastical organization.

The net result of a century of political struggle accompanied by actual persecution is that the whole relation of Church and State has been immeasurably clarified. The Catholic laity (still the great majority of the people) have become conscious of their part in the conflict. Politically, Mexicans outside of the National Revolutionary Party are more clearly conscious of the "unconstitutionality" of all their constitutions since the beginning of their attempt to set up constitutional government.

Ineptitude, insincerity and much dishonesty in the administration of the new program of social reform (Dwight Morrow's bugbear) is spreading doubt and unrest among the Indian masses upon whom the Party must rely to remain in power. The Party has reached that point to which all revolution comes, when to recede from an extreme point is a sign of weakness and is dangerous, while not to recede may be fatal.

Without attempting to draw analogies from our own American political field, that is why the Mexican situation is of enormous interest to the political scientist and to the diplomat. It presents a challenge to the traditional and fundamental American assumption that men do have inalienable rights, which must be protected against invasion from any source. It raises a positive question of how far we may or should go to prevent their extirpation on this continent. That is not too much to say; for as Mexico is going, so will all those Hispanic peoples go in which a white aristocracy has been superimposed upon a dense Indian population.

A "good neighbor" policy is the only sound basis of diplomacy. It remains however the vaguest of pious aspirations, the most impractical of formulae, the most dangerous form of mental softness, unless it is based upon the same principles on both sides of the border. The rear end of an ostrich, its head in the sand, is not an inspiring or even a satisfactory good neighbor.



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# Families of Minds

WILLIAM LOWE BRYAN
*President of Indiana University*

SAINTE-BEUVE uses the expression "families of minds" to designate groups of authors differing profoundly from one another in temperament and point of view (Descartes, Pascal; Bossuet, Voltaire). I wish to use the expression to designate major groups which differ still more profoundly: scholars, artists; philosophers, mystics, etc. (Shelley, Newton; Darwin, Coleridge; Saint Thomas Aquinas, Saint John). There is the story that Shelley once proposed a toast "To the confusion of Sir Isaac Newton." Why that? "Because with his mathematics he has driven poetry out of the solar system." Those two could never be of the same family of minds.

There are individuals, greater and less, who by temperament and by their life-work belong within two or more families of minds (Leonardo, Goethe). There are also many more persons, greater and less, who belong within one family of minds only. The men within each major family of minds look at everything in the universe from their peculiar point of view. Thus Hegel has a philosophy of nature, a philosophy of mind, of history, of art, of every variety of religion. So also scientists deal in the manner and method of science with the universe of things and of men, including art and religion. But when, for example, a philosopher such as Hegel says all that he has to say of exact science or of fine art, the scientist who is primarily scientist and nothing else will have nothing to do with Hegel's idea of science and the artist who is artist through and through holds Hegel's conceptions of art in derision. In like manner the scholar's analytic study of art or of mystic religion on the basis of the facts which he assembles is anathema to Shelley and folly to Saint Thomas à Kempis. There are no closer affinities between men than the affinity between men of exactly the same family of minds, as for example two mathematical physicists, one of India

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and the other of America, or two mystics, one a Buddhist and one a primitive Quaker. There are no more profound misunderstandings and no more incurable hostilities than between men even of the same race who by temperament and life-work belong to disparate families of minds. An eminent painter once spoke to me with angry contempt of certain notable experiments made by a distinguished psychologist on art and art appreciation. That psychologist may approve the painter; the painter had only scorn for the measurements and graphs of a man from an alien family of minds.

Now the school is the domain of the scholar. The school is *dominated not exclusively but prevailingly throughout by the* scholar family of minds. This is probably inevitable and justifiable. The first lessons in the school are set by an older to a younger scholar. These first tasks lead straight up to the great departments of scholarship: mathematics, geography, grammar, philology, history, etc. Even when the materials of study are works of art, most of the work, better and worse, when done in school, is work of the scholar kind and not of the artist kind. The child is directed to study the poem, to analyze it, discuss it, write about it, perhaps parse its words. The man is directed to write a Doctor's thesis about it.

I have no quarrel with this. It is justifiable, necessary. But, when all is done with a poem that can be done by the method of the scholar, something essential remains to be done by the method and in the spirit of the man who wrote the poem. In a sense it is true that to read a poem is to make it. The scholar who visits the school will see that most of the work there is on the way to his kind of scholarship. But the poet who visits the school will find that most of the work, even with his poem, is not on the way to his kind of mind. The poem as it was born and grew in him is not there.

I would not, if I could, deny to the scholar of any sort his right to study and teach any art in any way he chooses but in my view if art is to come quite rightly into the school it must also come in the mode and spirit of the artist family of minds. This



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cannot come easily. No important work of art can be known except by some such strenuous work as the artist did when he made it. This strenuous work, however, is not done for the purpose of writing a thesis but in order to interpret the work in its own form. The best thing to do with a song is to sing it. The best thing to do with a lyric is to read it. The best thing to do with a play is to play it. Ellen Terry was asked what Henry Irving thought of a certain play of Shakespeare. She made the surprising reply, "I believe he has never read it," but added, "If he undertakes to play it he will know more about it than anyone." When Miss Terry herself, glorious in beauty at 27, was asked to play Portia she wrote: "Portia! It seemed too good to be true. I was a student when I was young. I knew not only every word of the part but every detail of that period of Venetian splendor in which the action of the play takes place." (*Story of My Life*, p. 111.) Miss Terry could write almost as well as she could act. But her years of study of Portia were not to end in essay. She studied Portia to *be* Portia.

Is this possible? You know that it is done. More and more all the way from lower grades up such work is done. I have seen children in the sixth grade, from the poorer quarters of town, eagerly emulating one another in reciting the parts of a good play as a class exercise. These children were entering a little way joyously into the artist family of minds. In high school and college the possibilities are unlimited. Scenes and acts from the greatest plays may be given as class exercises as well as also upon the stage with all accessories.

The teacher and the young people have tasks of immense difficulty and of absorbing interest in finding the way to the interpretation of these works of art which unite the greatest thought with the most profound emotion. Only superficial consideration could regard such study and interpretation as less virile and austere than that of the scholar's method with the same works of art. There is no labor more passionately strenuous than that of the writer of a great play or of one who finds his way to an adequate interpretation of it.



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All that I advocate is done more and more but still not enough. What I specifically urge is a larger number of options for students in all grades so that at any rate many of them may choose to study works of literature in order to read them aloud adequately. A Harvard graduate of long ago has told me of his freshman course in Shakespeare with Francis J. Child. Each boy had to commit to memory a thousand lines within the semester. But the eminent scholar did nothing in that class that semester, said my informant, but read Shakespeare from day to day—exquisitely well.

We are in the midst of a renaissance of the drama. In school, in church, indoors, out of doors, our folk are finding that they can find life and express life in this supreme form of art. The scholar and the philosopher will go on with their inevitable and necessary tasks, but more and more the artist will lead his share of the people into the kind of world which the artist creates.

# The Valiant

JOHN HOLMES

Women most sorrowful and good men grim
Carry their poor patched hearts among us here;
Here now, beside you here, limb touching limb,
Eye meeting eye, voice speaking known and near,
But never in your hearing salt or curt.
They do not show their grief by being grave.
It is with common speech they hide their hurt.
These are the brave. These are the very brave.

Honor them stoutly. Help them. Love them more.
Give what they ask, and do not ask them why,
And when they knock, cry to them at your door:
God rest you merry who will sometime die.
Remember then you know all this is done
In vain for the valiant: you yourself are one.



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# Science Admitted to the Bar

MEIER STEINBRINK
*Justice of the New York Supreme Court*

IN laboratories throughout the world scientific men are devoting themselves night and day to the solution of problems confronting them. Leading scientists recognize that nature holds secrets yet unfathomed, but the search for truth and fact goes on unabated. Relentlessly they pursue paths not wholly of their making, trails blazed by their predecessors over long periods of years, and with this accumulated knowledge they press on to solve that which years ago seemed unfathomable. Science never stands still. Although motion may not always be progress, nevertheless effort toward advancement should not be relaxed.

Likewise law is not static, though frequently the charge is made that it is as blind to progress as the figure of justice itself. The contention may be made that, generally speaking, the law and the legal profession do not grasp with avidity at the new and that often that which is first tendered is rejected, only to be accepted at a later date when time and further experimentation have demonstrated the soundness of the original offer. Let us see how this is evidenced in the paths of legal history.

Less than eight centuries ago the proffer of evidence in the trial of a case was unknown. Unlike the procedure familiar to us wherein judgment follows the evidence, archaic proof then followed the judgment. The party bringing suit made his charges, to which his adversary replied. The court then awarded proof to one or the other party. Most often the one to whom proof was awarded sought to prove the validity of his claim by oath. The oath-taking procedure was rigidly formal, both as to words and gestures. The oath-taker was usually aided by oath-helpers. A hand once raised must not be lowered, a hand placed on the hand of an oath-helper, on a relic or on a sword could not be moved until the oath was completed. A movement of the hand, a wrong sequence of words or even a stammer was suffi-



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cient to defeat his cause. If the oath had been properly given and the customary pause had elapsed with no one visibly smitten by divine wrath for perjury the proof was considered not only complete but conclusive. The adversary took his defeat with composure in the knowledge that if he were right the oath-takers would ultimately suffer divine wrath. If a man did not desire or was not allowed to take the oath he could prove his claim by ordeal. The ordeal was deemed a "judgment of God." The commonest forms were by water and fire. In the former the accused was thrown into a pool. If he sank it was a sign of his innocence, since otherwise he would not have been received by the water. If he floated he was lost. By fire he was given the alternative of lifting a red hot iron one pound in weight and carrying it three paces. The hand that held it was then bandaged and if on removal of the bandage three days later there appeared a blister "as large as half a walnut" that was a conclusive sign of guilt. The Norman conquerors introduced another form of ordeal, trial by battle. When a criminal charge was made the accuser and accused, if not physically incapable of battle, were required to fight in person. If the dispute involved land the claimant offered battle, not in his own name but in the name of one of his hirelings, most often a professional whose business it was to fight other men's battles. If the accuser could not "by his body" prove the truth of his charge before twilight he failed and was deemed a perjurer. The object was not to kill but by brute force to compel the adversary to cry "craven." In a criminal case the accused, if vanquished, was hanged or mutilated. In a civil cause the craven, as a confessed perjurer, had to pay a fine of sixty shillings and was thenceforward infamous. Although in England this archaic method of settling disputes was not formally removed by statute until 1833, trial by jury was known as early as the 12th century. Originally jurors were called in, not to pass on facts but to give evidence; but with the passage of time witnesses were called, and juries after hearing the evidence gave their verdicts. In certain urban communities of England as early as the 14th century specially qualified jurors were called in when



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necessary to pass on questions which required peculiar skill. Skilled persons were later summoned to the advice of the court and then were made available by compulsory process. This is still resorted to in English courts where technical questions are involved. These expert witnesses were called at a time when ordinary witnesses were permitted to state their own conclusions from facts observed, and when the rule excluding such lay opinions was promulgated it was not applied to expert testimony. Today experts are permitted to give their conclusions to the jury only when the conclusion to be drawn from the facts stated, as well as the facts from which they are drawn, are not of common knowledge but are peculiarly within the knowledge of men whose experience and study enables them to speak with authority on the subject. But where the jury may itself draw conclusions from the expert's testimony on the facts, the expert's conclusions are not admissible.

Thus by slow degrees and by progress almost imperceptible the law in its search for truth has passed from adherence to the supernatural to a rational approach in the litigation of disputes. The struggle against superstition was not won in a day. It was not uncommon for old English lawyers to argue at great length in assigning responsibility for physical injury, death, or the destruction of property to magical or spiritualistic causation. A quotation from Blackstone's *Commentaries* will reveal a comparatively recent expression of the law's attitude toward witchcraft and its variations.

> To deny the possibility, nay, actual existence of witchcraft and sorcery, is at once flatly to contradict the revealed word of God, in various passages both of the Old and New Testament; and the thing itself is a truth to which every nation in the world hath in its turn borne testimony, either by examples seemingly well attested, or by prohibitory laws; which at least suppose the possibility of a commerce with evil spirits.

Gradually we move from the postulate to the ultimate. Our law begins in what today appears to be darkness. Its progress confessedly has been slow, but equally sure.



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No pretense is here made at an exhaustive collation of the countless and ever-mounting scientific contributions to jurisprudence. Rather we are here concerned with the methods by which the law has attempted to keep pace with the progress in other fields.

The statute books are replete with laws enacted to safeguard and promote public health, laws conceived out of the painstaking research of men of science and covering such myriad subjects chosen at random as the care and feeding of cows, prevention of disease in trees, shrubs, plants and vines, labeling of foods and drugs, zoning regulations, maximum hours for labor, special legislation affecting labor conditions for women, compulsory vaccination. Courts in determining the applicability of these statutes to a given set of facts or in passing upon their constitutionality in a case where it is claimed that their enforcement would result in a deprivation of liberty or of property without due process of law have freely consulted scientific studies. As was said by Mr. Justice Cardozo in an address delivered before the New York Academy of Medicine:

> We do not turn to a body of esoteric legal doctrine, at least not invariably, to find the key to some novel problem of constitutional limitation, the bounds of permissible encroachment on liberty or property. We turn at times to physiology or embryology or chemistry or medicine—to a Jenner or a Pasteur or a Virchow or a Lister as freely and submissively as to a Blackstone or a Coke. Of course, even then we try to know our place and exhibit the humility that becomes the amateur. We do not assume to sit in judgment between conflicting schools of thought. Enough it is for us that the view embodied in a contested statute has at least respectable support—its sponsors, if perchance its critics—in the true abodes of science. Shall hours of labor be limited to one calling or another, for this group or for that? The physiologist as well as the sociologist must supply us with the body of knowledge appropriate to the problem to be solved. Such cases as People v. The Schweinler Press decided by the Court of Appeals of New York in 1915, and Muller v. Oregon, decided in 1908 by the Supreme Court of the United States, show the answer of the courts when the enlightening facts were put before them by workers in other fields. Shall compulsory vaccination be exacted of the children in the public schools?



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Read the answer of the courts in Matter of Viemeister, decided in 1904, and Jacobson v. Massachusetts, decided a year later. Only the other day my court had to deal with the propriety of the tuberculin test as applied to herds of cattle, the unfortunates who responded to the test being marked for quarantine or slaughter.

During the course of the same address Mr. Justice Cardozo paid tribute to the valuable contribution made by those who, as a result of their profound studies, persistently advocate a complete reshaping of the conventional method of dealing with convicted criminals. He was of the belief "that at a day not far remote the teachings of biochemists and behaviorists, of scientists and penologists, will transform our whole system of punishment for crime."

Deficient as we may deem present-day methods of dealing with criminals they nevertheless mark a revolutionary change over the methods employed not so many years ago. Under the English law no more than a century past 160 crimes, including larceny of twelve pence or more, were punishable by death. It is reported that in 1801 a child of thirteen was hanged in England for larceny of a spoon. Those fortunate enough to escape the death penalty were subjected to all forms of torture and mutilation. A typical statute was the following:

> If any person shall falsely forge, or make, or cause, or assent to be falsely forged or made, any false deed, charter or writing sealed . . . court roll or will in writing . . . shall be convicted . . . he shall pay to the party aggrieved disability costs and damages to be assessed by the court . . . and shall be set on the pillory and there have his ears cut off, and his nostrils slit and cut, and seared with a hot iron; he shall also forfeit to the crown the profits of his lands during life and suffer perpetual imprisonment.

The court has likewise kept pace with the studies of mental diseases. In the early stages of the law insanity was no defense to a crime. Later a defense was allowed when the person accused had no more understanding than a wild beast. By slow stages the limits of the defense were so widened as to excuse the accused if his mental condition was such that he was incapable



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of distinguishing between right and wrong in general. Later it was permissible to prove that this inability to distinguish between right and wrong referred solely to the particular act with which he was charged. But in 1873 the court of appeals of New York refused to accept the doctrine that a criminal act may be excused because it is the result of an irresistible impulse to commit it. The court said:

> The argument proceeds upon the theory that there is a form of insanity in which the faculties are so disordered and deranged that a man, though he perceives the moral quality of his acts, is unable to control them, and is urged by some mysterious pressure to the commission of acts, the consequences of which he anticipates but cannot avoid.
>
> Whatever medical or scientific authority there may be for this view, it has not been accepted by courts of law.
>
> The vagueness and uncertainty of the inquiry which would be opened, and the manifest danger of introducing the limitation claimed into the rule of responsibility, in cases of crime, may well cause courts to pause before assenting to it.

Although much has been learned since this decision on the subject of mental diseases was handed down and the fear expressed by the opinion no longer exists, the courts of New York are still shackled by an outworn legislative definition of insanity. Many states, however, recognize that insanity may be reflected in an irresistible impulse. In civil actions, where there are no statutory definitions to hamper an examination into a person's mental condition for the purpose of assessing damages or for the purpose of appraising his responsibility for acts, the opinions of experts on the subject of mental diseases are freely accepted.

There has been considerable experimentation in an effort to subject testimony to scientific appraisal, the most frequently mentioned being the lie detector test which makes use of an apparatus registering changes in blood pressure, respiration and pulse of the person questioned. The theory behind the test is that in substituting a false imagination for the conscious will to speak truthfully, there are brought into play in the body certain functional changes which may be accurately registered, and



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untruthful statements thus detected. In refusing to sanction the use of this so-called systolic blood pressure test a court said:

> Just when scientific discovery or principle crosses the line between experimental and demonstrable stages is difficult to define. Somewhere in this twilight zone the evidential force of the principle must be recognized, and while courts will go a long way in admitting expert testimony deducted from a well recognized scientific principle or discovery, the thing from which the deduction is made must be sufficiently established to have gained general acceptance in the particular field in which it belongs.

Another test involves the use of the so-called "truth serum" (scopolamin) to induce unconsciousness during which the subject's mental activities continue and his answers to questions are truthful. Hypnosis is still another test now the subject of experimentation. Some scientists claim that hypnotic sleep is a condition in which the subject will make truthful answers to questions. The test is limited, however, to those susceptible to hypnotic influence.

None of these tests have as yet been judicially accepted but only because among men of science their trustworthiness has not received general recognition. When such recognition is given there will remain no valid reason for their judicial rejection.

Closely related to this subject is the use of the Binet-Simon Intelligence test by at least one court to measure the intelligence of witnesses, their powers of perception and recollection.

The possibilities of microscopic chemical, bacteriological and pathological analyses are almost unlimited and their results often uncanny in the detection of crime. An excellent example of the fruits of such research is to be found in the testimony adduced at the Hauptmann trial linking both the wood and the nails used in the Lindbergh kidnap ladder with wood and nails found in the defendant's home. In May 1932 Arthur Koehler, a government wood technologist, was assigned the task of tracing the lumber used in the kidnap ladder. Examination disclosed that the wood came from a North Carolina forest. He canvassed



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1598 lumber mills from New York to Alabama and found that only 25 used machine planes with the same number of knives that must have cut the lumber in the ladder. By detecting a distinctive and individualistic "revolution mark" in the lumber taken from the ladder the field was narrowed to a single mill in North Carolina which used a peculiar pulley that produced the distinctive mark. It was further found that from the time these pulleys were put into use up to the time of the kidnaping, 45 carloads of this particular type of wood were shipped to 25 different concerns. But not all the 45 carloads showed the marks on the ladder wood which had been due to irregularities in the knives of the planing machine, because the knives were sharpened from time to time. Finally the lumber was traced to a lumber yard in the Bronx almost one year before Hauptmann was apprehended. Thus, in the greatest lumber-producing country in the world Koehler had taken a piece of wood and had traced it from the forest where it was cut through the mill where it was dressed to a lumber yard that Hauptmann had patronized from time to time. Koehler told at the trial how he had climbed up to Hauptmann's attic and fitted a rail from the ladder into a gap found in the flooring. The rail fitted the hole exactly even to the position and slant of the nail holes in the rail as compared with the holes in the joists of the flooring. By means of enlarged photographs he showed that the grain of wood in the ladder upright matched the grain in the attic wood and that the number of annual rings in each was the same. He also demonstrated that the plane marks on the ladder wood were produced by Hauptmann's plane and that a chisel of the same size as the one missing from Hauptmann's tool chest and found at the scene of the crime must have been used to mortise the recesses in the uprights where the rungs fitted in. He also showed that the saw cuts on the ladder and on the wood in the attic were made with a saw that cut from 35 to 70 thousandths of an inch wide and that Hauptmann had two saws which made cuts of that width.

Hairs, blood, dust, fibers, skin, sand, pollen grains, bacteria, knife marks, etc. furnish clews. An example of the startling re-



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sults obtained is found in an investigation which followed the discovery near a home in Berkeley, California of several sticks of dynamite to which were attached a cap and fuse tied by a piece of cotton twine. This cotton twine was immersed in distilled water and violently shaken. The water was then siphoned out of the vial and the precipitated material was subjected to microscopic examination. The examiner in his report found that the twine came from a farm upon which would be found a fast-running stream of water, pine trees, several specified varieties of shrub, black and white rabbits, a bay horse, a light cream-colored cow and Rhode Island Red chickens. The dynamite was traced to a dealer from whom it was learned that three sales were made in the vicinity. This led to the discovery of a farm adjacent to the premises occupied by one of the purchasers of the explosive and precisely fitting the farm described in the examiner's report.

Some time ago a rather interesting case was solved, not by the crushing logic of a Sherlock Holmes but by careful scientific examination. Two undertakers were in partnership. One of them obtained a substantial life insurance policy naming the other as his beneficiary. Not long thereafter a bungalow burned down and the burnt body of a man was found in the ruins. The undertaker who was designated beneficiary under the insurance policy claimed that the body was that of his partner. The external part of the body was completely burnt, thereby eliminating any possibility of positive identification. But by measurement of the bones it was estimated that the deceased was two inches taller than the missing undertaker. Examination of the lungs showed a well-developed case of pneumonia whereas the missing undertaker had been well a few hours before the fire. Further examination of the internal organs disclosed that the deceased was dead when the fire started. The presence of formaldehyde indicated that the body had been embalmed. As a result of these findings it was proved at the trial that the two undertakers had simply taken a body which had been embalmed, placed it in the bungalow, and then set the fire.



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Recently, in a case tried before me, it was claimed that a man was run down by a truck and killed. He was found dead in the street next to his bicycle. There were no eye-witnesses available to testify as to the manner in which he was killed. But by comparison of strands of hair found in the grease of the king-pin of the steering wheel of the truck which was claimed to have caused this man's death, and from the head of the accused, and by the comparison of paint on the bicycle and a specimen found on the bumper of the truck, experts demonstrated that the hair found on the truck came from the head of the deceased and that the paint found on the truck came from his bicycle. As a result of this evidence the plaintiff-wife was successful in the action.

The reception into evidence of expert testimony to identify the exact gun from which a bullet was fired is now common upon a showing that the witness offering such testimony is, by experience and training, qualified to give expert testimony on firearms and ammunition. The basis of this ballistic science is the comparatively recent discovery that no two types of firearm have exactly the same marks in all details, a discovery made with the aid of special photography and metric apparatus. The discharged and test bullets are examined for characteristic marks. They are next severed horizontally and the upper part of each is superimposed on the lower part of the other. By superimposed pictures, matching of the common characteristics on both bullets is shown. When this is done positive evidence is furnished that both bullets were, or were not, discharged from the same barrel. A recent book on this subject casts considerable doubt on the claimed infallibility of many of the so-called ballistic experts and serves to illustrate the need for accepting with caution and reluctance conclusions smugly offered by students of a science still in its infancy.

The scientific investigation of disputed documents has often played the dominant rôle in the disposition of lawsuits. Under the earliest reported decisions only eye-witnesses to the writing of the disputed document were permitted to testify. Later, those who had seen a party write were permitted to express an opinion



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regarding the authenticity of a document where the opinion was based upon actual knowledge of the handwriting. These exclusionary rules, which rendered disputed documents practically impregnable to attack where actual knowledge of the handwriting was lacking, were in time relaxed in order to admit testimony on comparison of hands, but only with respect to a document in the case for some other purpose. This limitation remained in most common-law jurisdictions until removed by statute. The English statute enacted in 1854 was followed by legislation in this country, both federal and state, which sanctions the comparison of a disputed writing with any writing proved to the satisfaction of the court to be the genuine handwriting of any person claimed in the trial to have made the disputed writing. This change opened the way for the testimony of experts who have developed a field of scientific investigation based upon the finding that a person's style of writing in most details becomes fixed and serves as a continuous inseparable mark of that person and is well-nigh impossible of accurate simulation.

Closely allied to this main problem there arose related problems dealing with the propriety of using such auxiliary instruments as magnifying glasses, enlarged photographic specimens of handwriting, illustrations on charts, violet rays for disclosure of acid erasures, and the admissibility into evidence of the expert's reasons for his conclusions. The more recent precedents allow a sufficiently wide latitude in disputed document trials to make possible a legally supervised scientific investigation, free from those illogical restrictions that have so long hampered the usefulness of this type of inquiry. Some courts have gone even further perhaps than the development of this handwriting science justifies. In one case a handwriting expert after a comparison of signatures was permitted to testify that a grantor was intoxicated when he signed a certain deed. In another case an expert was permitted to testify that the person who wrote the specimen under examination was mentally deranged at the time of the writing. In still other cases the opinions of medical experts were accepted, based upon examination of writings, that



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the writers were suffering from senile dementia. What we today accept as commonplace was attained only in the face of close to three centuries of stubborn resistance and, unfortunately, even today the struggle continues without abatement in the courts of some of our states. More progressive courts have gone a step further and, recognizing that a typewriting machine may possess an individuality distinguishing it from other typewriters and recognizable through the work that it produces, have accepted expert testimony to identify a typewritten specimen.

That the ever-mounting toll in human life taken by automobile accidents constitutes a real menace to civilized communities is an all-too-familiar fact. A recent study of automobile accidents disclosed that of all drivers in automobile accidents in 1935, 3.1 per cent were found to be under the influence of liquor, but of all drivers in fatal accidents 6.8 per cent were found to be under the influence of liquor. Stringent laws on the subject have not accomplished their desired aim, mainly because courts are equipped with no adequate means of ascertaining the point at which intoxication sets in. Consequently many drunken drivers escape punishment. We learn that Oslo, Berlin and Hamburg have adopted the following procedure: when the accused is arraigned a surgeon pricks the lobe of his ear and extracts a few drops of blood which are analyzed for their alcoholic content in accordance with an approved technique. If the amount of alcohol found surpasses a certain critical quantity the accused is declared drunk. While chemists agree that by this test the quantity of alcohol taken may be proved, they do not all agree that it may be relied upon as a test of intoxication. It may be valuable, however, in connection with other more or less standardized tests, such as examination of the demeanor, the pupils of the eye, the tongue, breath, character of speech, memory, pulse, body temperature, and so on of the accused. Tests of this nature by duly qualified physicians and chemists should become an integral part of the procedure in all cases where evidence of intoxication is material.

The evidential value of motion pictures in the trial of a case



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is best demonstrated by instances where their use has been permitted. Most frequently they are shown in personal injury actions to disprove the plaintiff's alleged incapacity. In a case tried before me the plaintiff's claimed incapacity was utterly disproved by motion pictures taken of him after the accident. The plaintiff's claim was that from the time of the accident he was hopelessly crippled, was rendered lame and could not walk without the aid of a cane or crutch. Motion pictures taken some months after the accident showed him walking as a perfectly normal individual, without any assistance, in the company of a representative of his attorney. In one case the plaintiff alleged that he suffered a broken back and was paralyzed on the right side. At the trial he dragged his right leg and was apparently unable to use his right arm. Motion pictures taken after the accident showed the plaintiff playing ball with his son, doing work around the garden, walking up and down the street without the aid of a cane, and without any apparent limp boarding a street car and riding in an automobile. In a case which arose recently in New York the plaintiff claimed to have sustained very serious injuries. The defendant sought to prove by motion pictures that after the accident the plaintiff removed to another city where he conducted himself as a perfectly healthy man. The trial court's refusal to accept this form of evidence was adjudged erroneous on appeal, the appellate court saying:

> The well-known progress being made in the moving picture world has resulted in great accuracy in depicting the true condition sought to be shown. The mechanical means of perfecting such pictures has become so general that it may be necessary in the near future to frequently permit their introduction in evidence. In many cases the pictures may not only have a bearing upon the facts but may be absolutely decisive of the issues involved in the action. Their remarkable accuracy is now generally acknowledged through their constant use as a means of recording and publishing news items of interest to the public, and for that purpose they are featured daily in many of the moving picture theatres of the world.

Identification by means of finger-prints represents still an-



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other instance in which science has come to the aid of the court. This science of dactyloscopy is based upon the established premise that the pattern of ridges on the surface skin of the fingers of a given person never varies during the life of that person, and upon the further-established premise that the chance of one person's ten fingers showing the same pattern as another's ten is so infinitesimally slight as to be dismissed as negligible.

To men of science as well as those learned in law a case of profound interest is recorded among the earliest of criminal cases tried in the State of New York. It is especially interesting in the light of recent legislation in New York State (now being followed in other states) concerning the Landsteiner or blood-grouping tests for the purpose of establishing paternity in a very limited sense by a process of elimination, or in others of excluding paternity. In the early case referred to a filiation proceeding was heard before the Court of General Sessions more than 125 years ago. That court was composed of the then Mayor of the City of New York, the recorder and three aldermen. The colored defendant was charged with being the father of the child of a white woman. The details of the trial disclose that the then-known laws of generation were discussed by the medical men who testified. Reference was made to the opinion of Aristotle that the son should resemble the father and the experts even indulged in speculation concerning the loves of Theagines and Chariclea. The difficulties which in that case confronted the triers of the facts would find their solvent today in the provisions of the law which gives recognition to the Landsteiner tests.

From time immemorial, attempts to establish or exclude paternity have presented problems as baffling as that which faced King Solomon when called to decide between two conflicting maternal claims. One of the oldest and still frequently used methods of determining paternity is to point out the resemblance of the child to the putative father, though such evidence is inadmissible in some states. The unreliability of this form of proof is apparent when we recall numerous instances where strangers exhibit similar physical characteristics whereas blood relatives



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bear no resemblance to each other. Also fraught with unreliability is the examination of children, whose features are continually changing during the transitional period from childhood to adolescence, for points of resemblance to the putative father.

In 1900 Dr. Karl Landsteiner, of the Rockefeller Institute, reported his discovery of blood groups and suggested its application to blood transfusions. As a result of his discovery we now know that the blood is made up of two main fractions, the red cells which give the blood its color and the fluid called plasma which, on coagulation, becomes serum. In the human blood cells there are two substances, called agglutinogens *A* and *B*. If a person's red blood cells possess both of these substances he is said to belong to group *AB;* if neither he belongs to group *O;* if only *A* he belongs to group *A* and if only *B* he belongs to group *B*. In the serum there are two substances called agglutinins *a* and *b*. If serum containing agglutinin *a* is mixed with red blood cells containing agglutinogen *A*, these cells will be either clumped together or entirely destroyed. On the other hand, *a* serum would not affect red blood cells which do not contain agglutinogen *A*. Similarly, agglutinin *b* acts on red blood cells containing agglutinogen *B* but not on those containing *A* and *O*. As a result of that discovery it was concluded that a person of group *A* cannot have agglutinin *a* in his serum, nor can the serum of a group *B* person contain agglutinin *b*. This made possible the general use of blood transfusion.

The blood-grouping test to disprove paternity is based upon the following properties affecting the blood: (1) the blood group of any individual can be determined at birth or shortly thereafter; (2) the blood group of every individual remains constant throughout life; (3) the blood groups are inherited in accordance with Mendel's law. With the discovery that blood groups are inherited it became possible to predict what the blood groups of the children must be if the groups of the parents are known. Thus, *A* and *B* never appear in the blood of a child unless present in the blood of one or both parents. The applicability of the test was extended by the discovery of two additional ag-



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glutinogens *M* and *N* and their hereditary characteristics. As a consequence the blood grouping test may now be applied generally, but only to exclude and not to establish paternity.

There are any number of cases in which the test might prove useful. It might be used by a husband to prove his wife's adultery; by a defendant in a filiation proceeding; and by parents to identify children interchanged at childbirth in a maternity ward. It might be used to expose a woman's false claim that a certain child is her own, made in order to compel a man to marry her or that the child may become the heir to her husband's estate. Frequently in homicide cases blood stains are found on the clothing or body of the accused. This test may be said to show that the blood stain could not have come from the deceased.

Since 1924 the test has been allowed in the courts of most European countries and also in Japan. Courts of this country, perhaps because of their common-law heritage which looks to precedent for decision and the possible absence of jurisdiction over persons not formally parties to the law-suit, such as the child, have been slow to accept the test even though its trustworthiness is acclaimed without dissent by the medical profession. Occasionally from the newspapers we learn that the test has been employed extra-judicially or has been attempted in some of the courts. Last year in a New York case wherein the plaintiff charged the defendant with criminal assault, claimed to have resulted in the birth of a child, the defendant applied before me for a blood test to disprove his paternity. The application was granted on the theory that the issue of paternity was material in the action and that the trustworthiness of the test was no longer questioned. The order directing the test was reversed by the appellate court on the ground that requisite statutory authority was lacking. At the next ensuing session of the New York legislature statutes were enacted empowering the courts to order blood tests by duly licensed physicians and to receive the results thereof in evidence. These statutes may well serve as models for legislative action throughout the country. In the place of conjecture courts may now, upon a scientific basis,



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approach solution of many of the vexing disputes which arise in connection with questioned paternity.

Today every conceivable type of case may require the services of persons skilled in the sciences. Illustrations from cases actually tried flock readily to mind—testimony concerning the sensitivity of individuals to particular laxatives, the result of the application of certain chemicals to the human skin, the length of skid and wheel marks to show speed at which an automobile was traveling or the adequacy of brakes, use of the refracting lens in the special form of the spectroscope to reveal chemical constituents by color bands, the use of dictographs, sound recording instruments, x-rays, and so on.

Minds of lawyers and judges ingrained with certain beliefs, doctrines or principles do not always respond to facts as they are but rather as these men at first blush think they are. We must recognize that law and science touch the economic life at every turn, and since they do there must be between them cooperative effort in the endeavor to solve our problems.

At present a motion picture entitled *The Story of Louis Pasteur* is being presented to the public. The epitome of its conclusion is one which not alone students of the sciences but students of the law also may take to heart. At its close Pasteur says:

> You young men, doctors and scientists of the future, do not let yourselves be tainted by bare skepticism, nor despair at the sadness of certain hours that creep over nations. Do not become angry at your opponents, for no scientific theory has ever been accepted without opposition. Live in the strict peace of libraries and laboratories. Say to yourself, first, "What have I done for my instructor?" And, as you gradually advance, "What am I accomplishing?" until the time comes when you may have the immense happiness of thinking that you have contributed in some way to the welfare and progress of mankind.

To students of the law there comes a like satisfaction born of accomplishment.



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# Gypsy Patterans in Print

RICHARDSON WRIGHT
*Editor of "House and Garden"*

THE gardener said the hens were laying fourteen eggs a day and the cook, supported by the family, declared that if she had to face another omelet or an angel cake she'd depart. Fourteen eggs a day is a serious albumen embarrassment. For a moment we saw no way out of it. Fourteen eggs today, tomorrow and the next day and the day after that. What in decency could we do with them? They might have been put down in water-glass. They might have been bartered at the local store were not the groceryman himself suffering from an excess of eggs. Then came the thought of a widow down the road. A henless widow. And that's how it happened that, on this late April morning, I solemnly marched down the valley bearing three dozen fresh eggs. Actually bearing them. Neighbors had borrowed all the baskets with handles, so I was forced to put the eggs in a basket without a handle. This is an important point. When you carry three dozen eggs in a handleless basket you don't just swing it on your arm; you hold it reverently in both hands before you, like a vestryman bearing the offertory up the aisle. In this state I proceeded down the road, treading carefully, my head filled with grateful thoughts about widows. Rivulets gurgled along the roadside. The roadway was soft to my feet. Overhead puffy little clouds lolled against a pale blue sky. Having thought on widows I began reciting

> All on an April morning,
> April airs were abroad,

when a car shot past. It came to a sudden halt with screeching brakes. Out jumped three Gypsy girls. They ran toward me, their trinkets jingling. I too came to an abrupt halt, set down the



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basket and instinctively buttoned up my coat. Just as I finished the last button they grabbed at my hands.

No, I didn't want my palm read, but having saluted them in the few Romani words I could recall I asked whether they were Lees or Boswells or Herons or Stanleys or Coopers. This was the sort of family question I understood that Gypsy scholars ask Gypsies. It was also very highbrow of me. No wonder they guffawed. Did I have a match? asked one, and the other two crowded closer. I slid a box from a side pocket. It was too quick a gesture for even their nimble fingers. My hands were always free. So they backed away and pulling my leg in perfectly good English allowed as how I must be a *Romano rai* for I wasn't to be fooled. With that they darted off. And I, more than usually self-conscious, picked up the eggs and went on my widoward way.

It was the first time (and last) I had spoken to a Gypsy; it was the first time I had ever been called a Gypsy gentleman and I for these many long years a collector of books on Gypsies and a loyal paying member of the Gypsy Lore Society! A minor incident, yet it convinced me that the Borrows, the John Sampsons, the Irving Browns and Walter Starkies of Gypsydom could go as Romani as they pleased. Let them fiddle from caravan to caravan. Let them munch *hotchi-witchi* as though they really relished hedgehog, and have gory fist fights and fall in love with sinuous, black-eyed maidens. Let them have their pockets picked and collect all manner of romantic vermin and vocabularies. I prefer to remain an unregenerate *gorgio*, a fireside *rai*, and to find my Gypsy *patterans* (or *patrins*, if you insist) in print.

The Gypsy fever with which sentimentally inclined people claim they are attacked when the first warm breezes blow down the spring landscape has nothing to do with what we are to discuss here. That is mere romantic prickly heat and far from contagious. The real Gypsy fever, with which we will concern ourselves, is super-induced by neither zephyrs nor seasons. It is an intellectual rash caught from Gypsies themselves and it can break out at any time of year, both indoors and out. It is also highly infectious to such as have curious minds.



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The genuine *Romane raia*, or Gypsy gentlemen, are those who consort with Gypsies and speak the Romani *chib* or tongue. At the slightest hint of Gypsies in the neighborhood they rush into their most disreputable clothes, bid an abrupt farewell to wives and children, slam down their desks and disappear for hours, days and even weeks. What they do and learn in these periods of Ziganish slumming they usually record in books or contributions to learned journals. *Romane raia* also have a marked weakness for philology. They can't rest satisfied with picking up one dialect, say that of the Welsh Gypsies, but needs must compare it with the major and minor variations spoken by Romanies from all obscure corners of God's far-flung creation. They put on their eye-glasses and study Gypsy folk tales and songs like so many jewelers squinting at a new batch of stones. Gypsy customs as to funerals, weddings, adolescent virginity and marital fidelity, clothes, family relationships, jail sentences and a hundred and one other "affairs of Egypt," tribal and individual, they scrutinize closely and collect with unabated fervor.

Such are the *bare raia*, the great gentlemen.

Below them come the purely mental or sedentary *raia*, those who read the findings of the higher caste and understand or pretend to understand them, according to their lights. To them playing at Tsiganologue is huge sport even though they come by their enjoyment second-hand. They, being not physically tempted or else being incapable of following Gypsy *patterans* at crossroads, prefer to trace them in the secure comfort of their studies. Consequently they are crushingly referred to as regarding the Gypsy tongue "less as a conversational medium than as a subject of vivisection." The great philologist, however, August Friedrich Pott, whose *Die Zigeuner in Europa and Asien* was one of the earliest studies of Gypsy dialects, never saw a Gypsy in his life. Excepting him (and he is really classed among the hierarchy), the rest are mere amateurs in the eyes of the genuine *Romane raia.*

Some of the rest even distinguish a still lower class, comprised of authors of novels in which Gypsies figure in most un-Gypsy-



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like circumstances, and those who write books and articles on Gypsies (not so unlike the one you are reading) by the simple method of pilfering their facts and verisimilitudes from the experiences and writings of the two higher classes of *raia*. These two upper classes, by the way, pursue the sport of ferreting out where the lowest Gypsy dabblers swipe their stuff and of catching them in mistakes.

There is no secret as to how this *rai* business started. Offhand it can be laid at the door of George Borrow. In 1888 a number of Borrovians, followers of his vagrant and dialectic example, thought that their hobby could be made to serve a more distinguished and permanent purpose if they formed a society and published their findings. Thus the Gypsy Lore Society came into being. Over the next four and a half years it produced three volumes, attaining a total of twelve quarterly magazines, which exertion so drained the fervor and finances of the founders that the organization went into a prompt decline and disappeared. In the short four and a half years it had accomplished quite a lot, however; it had published many papers from many sources and put Shelta, or the dialect of Irish tinkers, beggars, pipers and sieve-makers on the map, and—most laudable of all—had succeeded in convincing the world that Gypsy should be spelled with two y's. Fifteen years passed. Then the old urge came on again. Newly initiated *raia* revived the society, which has continued to flourish and to publish its *Journal* regularly ever since.

Without doubt it is the most exclusive organization in the learned world. Of the first three volumes of the *Journal* only 150 copies were printed. Since 1888 it has managed to attract only 553 members, and the present membership is composed of only 91 libraries and learned societies and 104 individuals. From the reputations of the individuals and their writings I should gather that I am the only living member who, up to the egg incident described above, had never held converse with a Gypsy. Nor has this group been confined to members in England: they are gathered from all over the world (although I do not recall having read any contributions by a Chinaman or a scholar from



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Haile Selassie's domain) and twice have Americans been president—Charles Godfrey Leland in the beginning and his niece, Elizabeth Robins Pennell, only recently. Americans are constantly contributing to the pages of the *Journal*, which isn't to be wondered at since, according to Dr. Irving H. Brown, one of the highest caste *raia*, there are between 50,000 and 100,000 Gypsies wandering around the United States all the time.

How does one become a Gypsy gentleman? The *bare raia* will naturally answer: "Go among Gypsies." That is easier said than done. One might start by dropping in at their winter quarters but these quarters are difficult to find and the welcome would be doubtful. Or one might seek them out in their chrysalis stage—just before they begin to fly. This is usually in late March. While the roads are drying up they hire an empty store, hang a phrenology chart in the window, and proceed to pick up a few pennies by palmistry, or greater sums by the deeper and disreputable methods of black art *dukkerin*. One evening walking up 3rd Avenue, New York, between 19th and 38th Streets I counted no fewer than a dozen of these phrenology charts. In summer, of course, one often encounters Gypsies along the road, and the keen-eyed searcher may occasionally find their camps. Since in this country wandering Gypsies travel by motor the picturesque *vardo* or caravan so often met on English roads is never seen here. Their women, however, usually dress in native costume even though they loll on the back seats of Fords and Buicks.

A neophyte might conceivably gain their confidence by persistence, but I believe it would be wiser to have some accepted *Romano rai* take one under his wing and chaperone him on visits. Meantime, by dutifully studying, one might acquire enough vocabulary to carry on sufficient conversation to gain at least a gesture of confidence. I gather from the writings of those who are confirmed haunters of Gypsy hangouts that one must not only inure himself to innumerable physical discomforts but must also overlook the whole category of amenities. The prize, however, is worth the trouble, for the genuine *Romano rai* is a man far above his fellows.



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The easier method (which you have already gathered carries no kudos with it) is to go Gypsying in books on Gypsies. Start with George Borrow and read him slowly in succession—*Zincali*, *The Bible in Spain*, *Lavengro*, *Romany Rye* and *Lavo-Lil*. Though some may become Borrovians by sheer personal predilection it is really better to be a Borrovian by inheritance. The taste is laid down, like good Burgundy, at birth, to be opened on your 21st birthday—or 35th. That was how I came by Borrow. I can remember my father speaking familiarly and casually of Jasper Petulengro and Benedict Mol. By my early 30's I found myself instinctively swapping hard-earned cash for Borrow "firsts" nor did I stop until all of them were on my shelves, together with some fragments of his manuscripts. Once a Borrovian a whole world of Gypsy books is opened unto you. And you can choose any tongue you wish to go Gypsying in. The great "Gypsy Bibliography" compiled by George F. Black of the New York Public Library comprised, up to December 1913, no fewer than 4577 titles. This includes books on Gypsies, books in which Gypsies figure, and magazine articles about them in every conceivable language. I daresay that by this time the list would total well over 5000. We shall be occupying enough space if we mention only a few of the more important items procurable or written in English.

Of course there was a lot of writing on Gypsies before George Borrow began setting pen to paper. In 1720 Heinrich M. G. Grellmann wrote his great work which first appeared in English in 1787 under the title *Dissertation on Gypsies*. But even before this there was an earlier Borrovian, one Bampfylde-Moore Carew, whose *Life and Adventures* appeared in 1745. This wanderer pictured most unreal Romanies, yet it seems that he actually did marry a Gypsy. There was also that whole battery of pamphlets on Elizabeth Canning, the 18th century young lady who claimed to have been kidnapped by Gypsies (a custom to which they are *not* given, by the way, as any G-man will attest) and who later was proven to have raised prevarication to a fine art. The turn of the century saw John Hoyland, in 1816, draw-



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ing deeply on Grellmann for his historical survey of Gypsies. A more genuine contribution was made in 1821 by Chamber's *Exploits and Anecdotes of the Scottish Gypsies* and by James Thompson in 1828 in his *New, Improved and Authentic Life of James Allan, the Celebrated Northumberland Piper*. In 1830 came Samuel Roberts' *Parallel Miracles or the Jews and the Gypsies*, to be republished six years later as *The Gypsies*. The year 1831 saw James Crabb publish the *Gypsy Advocate*. Mr. Crabb burned with an ardent desire to convert the Gypsies to religion. In the early part of the 19th century Scotland supported an active Committee for the Reformation of the Gypsies. I have often wondered if the interest taken in Romanies by Scotchmen—and it had been quite marked—wasn't aroused by this early movement. Perhaps some of the later scholars, in open rebellion, did all they could to check this devastating reformation. Also it must be remembered that one of Borrow's earliest endeavors was a *Gospel of St. Luke* in a Spanish Romani dialect. Only 500 copies were printed but he managed to sell them to Gypsy women in Spain who bought them as charms against arrest while thieving! I mention these earlier books because it is conceivable that Borrow came by as much of his Gypsying in the printed page as in any English lane or Spanish posada.

Today the *bare raia*, while holding Borrow in dutiful respect as, say, a 20th century Riverside Drive theologian might hold a pre-Nicene father, nevertheless smile indulgently on the old man's foibles and exaggerations and are more likely to let their orthodoxy extend no further back than to the 1888 founders. These patriarchs in English Romani were David MacRitchie, Francis Hinds Groome, Henry T. Crofton, G. A. Wilson, the Reverend J. F. M. Ffrench, John Sampson, Kuno Meyer, Thomas Davidson, Mrs. G. A. Grierson, Mrs. Pennell, Theodore Watts-Dunton, Charles Godfrey Leland and Sir Richard Burton.

Books and pamphlets by these beginners could well lay the foundation for a Gypsy library. MacRitchie wrote *An Account of the Gypsies of India*, 1886, *Ancient and Modern Britons*,



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1884, and *Scottish Gypsies Under the Stewarts*, 1894, together with 26 articles contributed to magazines, especially the *Gypsy Lore Society Journal*. Groome was responsible for *In Gypsy Tents*, 1880, *Gypsy Folk Tales*, 1899, and *Kriegspiel*, a Gypsy novel, 1896, in addition to 22 magazine contributions. Crofton did 25 Gypsy articles and, with B. C. Smart, *The Dialect of the English Gypsies*, 1875. In addition to the biography of her uncle Mrs. Pennell has written several articles on Gypsies and a book, *To Gypsyland*, 1893. Theodore Watts-Dunton had to his credit a Gypsy novel, *Aylwin*, 1898, and several poems on Romanies together with many magazine papers. Leland crowds three columns of Black's *Bibliography* with a formidable list of magazine contributions and books among which are *The English Gypsies and Their Language*, 1873, *The Gypsies*, 1882, *Gypsy Sorcery and Fortune-Telling*, 1895, his *Memoirs* the previous year and, in 1875, together with E. H. Palmer and Janet Tackey, *English Gypsy Songs with English Translations*. It was Leland, aided by Kuno Meyer (or Meyer aided by Leland) and abetted by several others, who discovered and gave to the world of Gypsy lovers, Shelta, the dialect of the Irish Tinkler Gypsies.

Collecting the books of these beginners I have found neither difficult nor embarrassingly expensive. A set of the *Journal*, of course, is desirable, although a complete file is by no means found on every second-hand bookstall—in fact when discovered it fetches a big fat price.

Whether the interest of these founding members started the great Gypsy craze or the Society was its outgrowth I cannot say. In any event, the second and third quarters of the last century saw a veritable spate of books on Romanies. Glance at some of them as they spilled from the presses—Crawfurd's *Origin of the Gypsies*, 1863, which made the heretical claim that the Roms didn't come originally from India; Woodcock's *The Gypsies*, 1865, and James Simson's valuable *History of the Gypsies* of the same year. In 1882 appeared Lucas's allegedly undependable *Yetholm History of the Gypsies* and in the same year J. W. De Peyster's *Gypsies* which he lifted cold from a German article



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of 1749. George Smith committed *I've Been A Gypsying* in 1881 and *Gypsy Life* the year before, both scorned by the higher *raia* of his time for pilfering. An excellent book is Norwood's *Our Gypsies in City, Tent and Van*, 1885. So are Hubert Smith's *Tent Life with English Gypsies in Norway*, 1873, and Laura A. Smith's *Romany Songland*, 1889, with both words and music. S. J. A. Fitzgerald's *Hungarian Gypsies* appeared in 1892 and in 1898 Sir Richard Burton's *The Jew, the Gypsy and El Islam*. A fascinating later book is Andrew McCormick's *Tinkler Gypsies*, 1907, fascinating because it tries to prove that Shelta was the tongue of the ancient Irish bards.

The greatest of the Gypsy authors I have left to the last since he so recently died—in 1931—John Sampson. Year after year he contributed to numbers of the *Journal* on a diversity of topics, especially Gypsy tales which he translated into English. Finally in 1928 he attained his great dream and a great scholastic achievement when his *Dialect of the Gypsies of Wales* appeared. The year before his death he also saw to press a charming Gypsy anthology, *The Wind on the Heath*, and shortly after his death appeared *Romane Gile*, poems in Romani with English renderings.

In the same breath with Sampson should also be named the Very Reverend Frederick George Ackerley, a Gypsy scholar of long standing, and Robert A. Scott Macfie. When Macfie died this last year the Society devoted an entire copy of its *Journal* to his memory. With MacRitchie and Sampson he revived the defunct society in 1907, for seven years was both secretary and editor of the *Journal*, and was constantly writing for it. He also laid claim to three books on his pet hobby—*The Gypsy Coppersmiths in Liverpool*, 1919, a volume on Bulgarian Gypsies in 1916, and a rare pamphlet entitled "The Romanichels," 1909, which appeared under his pen name, Andreas.

It would seem that these high gods of Gypsydom having passed away an end might come to the enthusiasm for the subject and yet, like the Gypsies themselves, new *tarno raia* spring up at



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unexpected corners and find the patterans the old 'uns have left behind that the young 'uns may know the route to take.

The United States in 1915 contributed Sinclair's *American-Romani Vocabulary*. Irving H. Brown elects to spend his summers with Gypsies in India, Spain and our own country. So far he has given us *Nights and Days on the Gypsy Trail*, 1922, *Gypsy Fires in America*, 1924, and *Deep Song*, 1929, in which he relates his experiences, especially in collecting Gypsy airs, in Spain. A boy's adventure book, *Romany Road* came out in 1932.

In Dublin another professor, Walter Starkie, forsakes classes and home, packs a fiddle and goes to wander with Hungarian Gypsies. From that summer's vagabondage came *Raggle Taggle*. Another summer gave us *Spanish Raggle Taggle*. Still another professor, the Principal of Glasgow University, Sir Donald MacAlister, in 1928 produced Romani versions of English poems.

This past year an authentic biography was written by the great-grandson of Borrow's Jasper Petulengro. Evidently this Rom has met great success in radio talks over British stations and popular articles in English papers. It almost seems indecent for a Gypsy to be relieving the tedium of dull English evenings by *rakeren* his *chib*, yet he has remained a true Rom, for each night after the broadcast he has returned to his prettily painted *vardo* parked on the outskirts of London. Mr. Petulengro is of Berber and English Gypsy extraction and from this aristocratic height surveys such romantic excursions as Starkie takes and such novels as Lady Eleanor Smith writes with dignified, undiluted scorn.

The follower of Gypsy patterans in print, like a collector of stamps, might specialize—and collect only those novels in which Gypsies figure prominently. There are Scott's *Guy Mannering*, of course, and Sir James Yoxall's *The Romany Stone*, 1902, and his *Smalilu*, 1904, and Theodore Watts-Dunton's *Aylwin* mentioned above. Lady Eleanor Smith's Tsingale romances are highly diverting and so are Konrad Bercovici's Romany tales. The upper crust of Gypsy scholars are apt to turn a jaundiced and not altogether unenvious eye on Bercovici. Especially did



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they delight in pointing out, when his *Story of the Gypsies* appeared in 1928, just where he should have used quotation marks and footnotes.

Although a great number of Gypsy scholars who wrote or are writing in English hail from Scotland or Wales, the lure of the Gypsy patteran makes no distinction when it comes to trades and professions. Among the parson *raia* are Archdeacon Ackerley and Canon Maynard and the Reverend George Hall. John Sampson was a printer's devil turned college librarian. The patteran lures poets like Watts-Dunton and Arthur Symons and artists of the stature of Joseph Pennell and Augustus John Brown. Starkie and MacAlister held or hold important posts on university faculties. Macfie managed the family business of refining sugar, and during the War ran his battalion commissary, out of which experience he distilled an amusing cook book containing the apothegm, "The proper study of mankind is meals." G. H. Black of the *Bibliography* has a long and scholarly record as librarian. Henry W. Shoemaker, who discovered the dialect of the She-Keners or Pennsylvania German Gypsies, was a newspaper owner until the Roosevelt dispensation turned him into a diplomat. Richard Burton and B. J. Gilliat Smith both served in the British consular service. Gypsy Smith, an authentic Rom, wound up as a moving and successful evangelist. There have also been doctors—Surgeon-Major G. Ranking, and F. W. Carew, prison physician.

These varied types of men found their delight in digging up and associating with strange characters and in studying strange words and names. And whether they met by the smoky fireside of a Gypsy encampment or in the warm security of their studies, whether the patterans they followed led to romance or research, the venture brought to each its own particular brand of enjoyment. Queer sticks all of them! For *Romane raia*, wherever you find them, are as Jasper Petulengro said: "I tell you what, brother, frequently as I have sat under the hedge in spring or summer time, and have heard the cuckoo, I have thought that we chals and cookoos are alike in many respects."



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# The American School of Indic and Iranian Studies

MORTIMER GRAVES

THE American School of Indic and Iranian Studies commenced its operations in October 1935 with an archaeological excavation at Chanhudaro in the Indus Valley jointly conducted by the School and the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. It will at the same time cooperate with the Department of Linguistics of Yale University in an investigation of non-Aryan (Dravidian and Munda) languages in India.

This School was incorporated in 1934 at the instance of the Committee on Indic and Iranian Studies of the American Council of Learned Societies. This committee had long considered the necessity for an American research school in India, and in 1930 secured pledges of sufficient funds to provide for establishing headquarters at Benares, to appoint a fellow and an annual visiting professor-director, and to set up very simple machinery for the conduct of research enterprises by American scholars desiring to work in India. The depression made it impossible to collect those pledges, and the incorporation of the School and inauguration of its activities had to be postponed. But in 1934 it became evident that certain Indic investigations of the first importance were waiting to be done and could be adequately promoted if the School were founded and brought to their aid. The School was therefore launched to direct or assist these enterprises, even though it was still impracticable at the time to set up a permanent headquarters. The purpose of the School is humanistic research, and this purpose it now proceeds to fulfil.

Although the article is signed by Mortimer Graves, Secretary-Treasurer of the American School of Indic and Iranian Studies, it is really a compilation of several brief statements by Dr. Ernst Mackay, Field Director, Dr. W. Norman Brown, President; Dr. Franklin Edgerton, Vice-President; and the Secretary-Treasurer.

## EXCAVATIONS AT CHANHUDARO

The first project sponsored by the School is the Indus Valley excavation. Excavations made by the Government of India at Mohenjodaro and Harappa in the Indus Valley during the past few years have revealed traces of a civiliza-



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tion that until 1922 was unknown and unsuspected. When first discovered these cities were thought to have flourished in Buddhist times, some 2000 years ago. Further excavation, however, carried back the history of India well-nigh another three millennia. The people who built these remarkable burnt brick cities early in the third millennium B.C. had already developed a culture, now generally termed the Indus Valley civilization, which was second to none among the contemporary cultures of the Near and Middle East.

This surprising revelation proved of the utmost interest to students of Indian history, by whom the Aryans had hitherto been regarded as the originators of modern Indian thought and culture. The fact that the pre-Aryan inhabitants of Northwest India had well planned, well built cities, provided with adequate drainage, bathrooms, and other amenities of life, has necessitated an entire recasting of our ideas as to the origin of Indian culture. Immense possibilities have been opened up by the discoveries already made; for though much has been learned about these mysterious people many fundamental questions still remain to be answered concerning their racial and geographical origins, their language, and their religion, including their burial customs and their views of an after-life.

Already we know that this newfound civilization extended over practically the whole of Sind and part, if not the whole, of the Punjab. Traces of it have even been unearthed in the foothills of the Himalayas. Ancient settlements in Baluchistan show evidence of at least the influence of these people, whose dominion seems to have been more widely extended than that of ancient Egypt or of contemporary Sumer.

The Government of India has only recently adopted regulations which permit learned societies and museums from other lands to conduct excavations there. The first foreign archaeological expedition under those rules is this American enterprise. The vast problems it will attack are of extraordinary importance, and the results will undoubtedly command world-wide interest.

The mounds of Chanhudaro, which lie near the eastern bank of the Indus some 80 miles southeast of Mohenjodaro, have for various reasons been selected as the most favorable site for excavation. These mounds cover an area at plain-level of approximately 700,000 square feet. Below plain-level preliminary excavations have shown them to be even more extensive; they have, in fact, been partially buried by the silt deposited by the Indus River in the course of some 5000 years.

The Indus now flows twelve miles to the west of Chanhudaro; but before the city was deserted there is reason to suspect that the



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river was within three miles of it, and perhaps closer still in even earlier days. Trial trenches have proved the ground on which the city was originally built to lie a considerable, and as yet unascertained, depth below the surface of the plain; twelve feet or so beneath the alluvium large quantities of finely painted pottery were found. More extended excavations will enable the Expedition to penetrate much deeper, and there is every reason to think that in the lower level objects will be unearthed that will antedate anything found at Mohenjodaro and Harappa. In fact, other trial excavations in Sind show the Indus civilization to have been preceded by an earlier people—the so-called Amri culture, named after one of the Indus Valley sites—whose origin and mode of life have yet to be discovered and interpreted. These folk, who made a very thin, multi-colored pottery, undoubtedly pre-date the builders of the Indus Valley cities; their remains have in several places been found below Indus Valley deposits. Who these people were and whence they came is another of the vital problems with whose solution the forthcoming expedition is concerned.

In the upper levels of Chanhudaro many objects dating from about 3000 B.C. should be found, for the site has already yielded antiquities of an earlier style than anything found at Mohenjodaro. Possibly Chanhudaro was not only founded but abandoned before Mohenjodaro rose to its known eminence as a trading city.

The upper levels of Mohenjodaro show us the Indus Valley civilization already in a state of decline, and Chanhudaro should produce finer works of art. The painted pottery already unearthed from the upper levels of its mounds is superior in technique and style to the painted pottery of Mohenjodaro, even such utilitarian objects as large storage-jars being superbly finished and decorated. The excavations at Harappa and Mohenjodaro have produced seals on which are engraved animals that are portrayed with very considerable fidelity; a large number of these seals rank in execution and artistic worth with any found in other ancient countries. The same is true of the jewellery and other forms of metal-work, and from Chanhudaro should come still finer work.

In addition, the seals of Chanhudaro might be expected to bear pictographic characters of more primitive forms than those already known but undeciphered on the seals from the other sites. Some of these latter characters are allied in form to the most ancient pictographic signs as yet known in Persia; indeed, there is some reason to think that the scripts of the Indus Valley and of Elam were derived from a common stock, from which some of the hieroglyphs of ancient Egypt may also



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have descended. What the expedition would like to find—and there is as much likelihood of it at Chanhudaro as elsewhere—is a bilingual inscription coupling the Indus Valley writing with the Sumerian script, which can be read. This is not so improbable as might appear, for in cities of the Indus Valley that have already been excavated incontestable evidence has been found that they traded extensively with ancient Mesopotamia between 3000 and 2500 B.C. The finding of Sumerian seals, beads, and other objects in India proves this connection beyond all doubt; moreover seals of unmistakably Indian workmanship, which doubtless once belonged to Indian merchants, have been found in the Sumerian cities in such numbers that they no longer occasion any surprise.

In the search for yet earlier evidence of this trading connection with Babylonia we look with confidence to Chanhudaro; for since that site is at some distance from the Indus it will be possible to carry the excavations deeper than at Mohenjodaro, where the river was so near that seepage prohibited any really deep digging.

Another question for which an answer must be sought at Chanhudaro is the possible existence of a purely Copper Age. Up to the present the deepest excavations at Mohenjodaro have shown bronze containing a large proportion of tin to be quite common, in use simultaneously with tools of pure copper. It is hardly likely that bronze was used prior to copper in India, though it may be that the Indus Valley people, who it is supposed were immigrants, were at their coming already acquainted with bronze, and that they may have been the first to introduce this alloy into India. The *Amri* people, who preceded the inhabitants of the excavated levels of Mohenjodaro, may have employed copper only for their tools and implements; and there is reasonable expectation that evidences of them will be found below the Indus Valley settlement of the Mohenjodaro period at Chanhudaro.

This earlier culture is of particular interest in that some of its painted pottery is allied in shape and by its thinness with certain of the earliest wares of Susa in Persia. If a definite connection between Persia and India can be traced as far back as 3500 B.C. or, not impossibly, a still remoter date, the American expedition will make an outstanding contribution to archaeological research, a field in which America has already worked with conspicuous success. That the expedition of the combined American School of Indic and Iranian Studies and the Museum of Fine Arts of Boston should be the first to work in India under the new regulations is a happy augury for the future of archaeology in that country.

The Chanhudaro excavation will be under the direction of Dr. E.



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J. H. Mackay, one of the world's outstanding archaeologists, with long experience in Egypt and Mesopotamia, and for six years in charge of the excavations at Mohenjodaro. No one could have been found more competent for the work, and the School hopes to be able to attach one or more young American scholars to the enterprise for training in the archaeology of India, for at present there is no American with adequate equipment in this field.

### Study of the Non-Aryan (Dravidian and Munda) Languages of India

The second enterprise upon which the School is engaged is the conduct, in collaboration with the Department of Linguistics of Yale University, of preliminary investigations in the non-Aryan languages of India. These fall into two main groups, the Dravidian languages and the Munda. The Munda languages are supposed to be related to the Mon-Khmer languages of Farther India. No linguistic connection between the Dravidian languages and any other has yet been made at all plausible, though many theories have been advanced. No comparative grammar of either group, worthy of the name, exists, and none can be attempted until far more preliminary descriptive work in the individual dialects has been done.

Four of the Dravidian languages (Tamil, Canarese, Malayalam, and Telugu) have literatures going back a thousand years or more. These literary languages occupy almost the whole of Southern India and have been covered by descriptive grammars, though not altogether satisfactorily. Their modern vernacular forms differ widely from the literary norm, and little is known of them. Of the dozen or so non-literary Dravidian languages, spoken partly in the south (Toda, Badaga, Tulu, Kota, Kudagu), but partly in the northeast and north center (Malto, Kurukh, Kui, Gondi, Kolami) and the far northwest (Brahui), only one (Kui) has received fairly satisfactory descriptive treatment. None of the Munda languages has a literature and none of them has been satisfactorily described. The non-literary languages of both groups are chiefly spoken by uncivilized tribes and are rapidly approaching extinction. Unless they are recorded soon they will be lost forever within a few decades. One of the most interesting and important, Toda, is spoken by only a few hundred people now.

Culturally, both the Dravidian and the Munda speaking peoples have been subject to Hindu influence for millennia. This is reflected in their languages, which are certainly full of Indo-Aryan loan-words and may have been influenced in other ways. Conversely Sanskrit and the later Indo-Aryan languages are believed to have



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been considerably influenced by Dravidian and Munda. Much has been written on this subject but all of it suffers from the lack of reliable data. There is reason to believe that a great many Sanskrit words, for which satisfactory Indo-European etymologies are lacking, are really of Dravidian or Munda origin. Many phonetic and morphological features of Sanskrit have also, with more or less plausibility, been supposed to be due to such influences. The studies here projected are therefore of great importance not only for general linguistics but specifically for Indo-Aryan and Indo-European studies.

This work will be commenced in the summer of 1935 by a study of the moribund Toda language, to be undertaken by Dr. Murray B. Emeneau, of Yale University, recently appointed a Research Associate of the School. He holds a Ph.D. in Sanskrit and is a thoroughly qualified general Indologist, in the cultural as well as the linguistic sense. He has a good background of Indo-European linguistics, some command of Malayalam, and has acquired from work with Professor Sapir the technique for recording so-called primitive languages worked out by the American school of linguistic anthropologists. This technique is commonly recognized as the best in the world for its purpose. It has never heretofore been applied to the study of any language of India.

After a careful recording of Toda it will be logical next to take up Tulu, another important south Dravidian language, and after that at least one northeast Dravidian dialect, probably Kurukh, and the isolated Dravidian Brahui of the northwest. It is estimated that in about three years these four languages could be satisfactorily recorded, texts taken down in phonetic transcription, and the results of at least the study of one typical language prepared for publication. A three-year program is envisaged, though support to it is assured only for the first year. Even this, of course, will be only a beginning; all the Munda languages as well as the other Dravidian dialects would have to wait.

In the process of this survey, problems of non-linguistic interest will arise, especially in working with such a people as the Todas, who are alleged to have a very primitive culture, relatively unaffected by Hinduism. It is hoped that funds may be secured for the support of a cultural anthropologist to collaborate with Dr. Emeneau on such problems, which are of the greatest interest to ethnology.

The School may be pardoned some slight pride in the auspicious beginning of its work. Yet it is only a beginning. There is need to establish modest headquarters at Benares and to secure provision of one or two fellowships—for work



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in the excavation at Chanhudaro, for instance, or for the completion of an enterprise of research begun in America but requiring supplementary work in India, such as a study of Indic death and funeral rites now being carried on by Dr. Horace I. Poleman of the University of Pennsylvania, and a study of Vedic solar deities, which is being conducted by Dr. Samuel D. Atkins of Princeton University. Granted a continued existence—and that in turn is dependent upon securing funds—there is no doubt that the School can be counted upon almost immediately to produce scientific results of high value as well as to promote the training of Indologists and Iranists in America and to widen appreciably the range of American study of the Orient.

• • •

## James Henry Breasted

HERBERT E. WINLOCK
*Director of the Metropolitan Museum, New York City*

With the death of James Henry Breasted America lost its most outstanding figure in archaeology and an historian whose name may well be mentioned with those earlier Americans Prescott, Parkman, and Motley who gave America so enviable a place in the science of history.

In Oriental Studies Breasted's position was unique. His training was of the soundest. Drawn into Egyptology in his student days at the Chicago Theological Seminary in 1888–90, he took his doctorate at Berlin shortly after and was chosen by Erman for a position on the staff of the great Egyptian dictionary then being composed by the Berlin Academy. His interest in the historical documents of ancient Egypt was kindled through this last activity and he introduced an innovation in the writing of the history of the ancient East by compiling his *Ancient Records of Egypt* which was published in 1906. With all the historical documents then known collected with a thoroughness far greater than in any previous publications he had laid the foundation for his *History of Egypt* which appeared at about the same time. Granted that he owed much to his German colleagues Adolf Erman and Edouard Meyer when he came to writing his survey of the history of the Nile, nevertheless he made his own personal contribution by fusing life and a broad interest into what had only too often been treated as a dry and narrow exercise in scholarship. A few years afterwards came his *Development of Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt* in which he did for Egyptian beliefs and philosophies what he had done for Egyptian political history.

All that we in America know about ancient Egypt has been deeply influenced by those three early books of Breasted's, and the whole



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English speaking world is as much his debtor as his own country. His more recent writings have continued the work that he started over thirty years ago. His school history *Ancient Times* which came out in 1916 made his name as familiar to the school children of the country as it had already been to scholars. It was so successful that for the ordinary lay reader he reëdited it in 1926 as the *Conquest of Civilization.* In 1933 he amplified his *Religion and Thought* with the *Dawn of Conscience,* which has become already a widely read work.

With an enviable reputation as the soundest of scholars, he became a figure of even more significance in science. His imagination had wandered over the whole field of the ancient Orient, and he envisaged a broadening of the archaeological activities of a single organization in a way that no one had even dreamed of before. He had been teaching in the University of Chicago since 1894 and had been Director of the Haskell Oriental Museum there since 1901. With his persuasive enthusiasm he accumulated a vast endowment, largely through the generosity of Mr. John D. Rockefeller Jr. and the Rockefeller Foundation, for the benefit of the University's Haskell Oriental Institute, of which he became Director in 1919. The program of work which he put into operation is literally stupendous. He started excavations and surveys of monuments in Egypt, Palestine, Syria, Asia Minor, Mesopotamia, and Persia, covering every epoch in the development of the inhabitants of that circle of countries, from the earliest paleolithic to the fall of the Roman Empire. The sound scholar had proved himself a great business man and demonstrated that he had one of the most imaginative outlooks of any American scientist.

Probably the first thing to strike anybody who met James Henry Breasted was a peculiarly contagious enthusiasm. He gave one the impression of being all springs inside, and those springs not only drove him to unremitting labor day and night but they carried along with him people of the most diverse temperaments. He could persuade the British Foreign Office, the State Department in Washington, the commanding officers of the army of occupation in Mesopotamia and his own University to help him, Mr. John D. Rockefeller Jr. and Mr. Julius Rosenwald to back him financially, and a whole group of archaeologists of all nationalities to work for him. His was a very scholarly, a very inspiring and a very charming personality.

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*Erratum:*—The college song referred to in "The Tune Detective Goes Collegiate" (Winter 1936 number) as the W. and J. Swing" should have been the "W. and L. Swing."



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# *Discussion*

## Mordant Irony

To the Editor:

Is there not mordant irony, in the January SCHOLAR, in putting the approval of slovenly English so near to Dean West's discriminating appraisal of the style of Horace? The writer of the paper, the title of which resembles a question-begging epithet, if he is not disingenuous, seems to underrate the intelligence of his readers, for changes in the popular meanings of words are not in the same category with offences in syntax. Inevitably, and often with real advantage, words gain new connotations, in popular use, by expansion or limitation of reference and scope. Such changes, though sometimes deplorable, are not revolutionary —as are certain lapses from grammatical integrity which the paper here criticized condones.

The chief causes of these errors are readily discerned: the polyglot nature of our population, and the bad examples set in the homes of school children (not always results of racial habits). But to let these hindrances, which are really challenges, determine the responsibility of teachers of English is a counsel of defeat which ought to gain no acceptance or even acquiescence from any who really know and value the language of our great writers.

If, as Buffon averred and exemplified, "the style is the man," one's vocabulary is an index of both culture and character. Any one who talks in slovenly fashion *because others do* impairs his own integrity. Many thousands of our fellow-countrymen certainly are reputable members in our complex society, without having any acquaintance with formal grammar. But when they are taught they are entitled to the best. One may admit cheerfully that a teacher should not "put the fodder too high for the calves" without implying permission to feed to them trash. Approval of slovenly habits of speech does not tend to build good citizens. "*Facilis descensus Averni.*"

H. M. DENSLOW.

. . .

## Doctors Clash

To the Editor:

WHEN Dr. Hugh Cabot says that good medical service is in fact received by a relatively small part of the population of our country he fails to recognize established facts concerning the distribution of medical service. Actually figures show that 40 per cent of our people do not require the service of a physician in any single year. They show furthermore that 50 per cent of the population are well satisfied with the medical



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service they receive, leaving only a possible 10 per cent dissatisfied with medical care or unwilling to accept charitable service. It is, of course, recognized that our provisions for free medical service are as good, or better than those in any other country.

Furthermore Dr. Cabot fails to recognize the fact that in this country we spend on physicians $500,000,000 per year but at the same time our people spend $125,000,000, or about one-fourth the amount given to doctors, on charlatans, chiropractors, osteopaths, naturopaths, mind healers and similiar unqualified healers of other sorts. Would it not be logical for those who are so anxious to improve medical service to relieve the people first of this burden of pure wastage? And to free the citizenry from the annual expenditure of some $350,000,000 on worthless patent medicines?

Perhaps most fallacious of all is Dr. Cabot's suggestion that the reduction of the number of physicians by 25 per cent is proposed by the Commission on Medical Education for the purpose of raising the income of the profession and diminishing the amount of medical service given. Surely he knows that the coming of the hospital, the telephone, good roads and various other advancements in medical service make it possible for one man to see far more people in a day than he could formerly and that in this country there is actually an excess of physicians, an excess demonstrated by the fact that we have more doctors in relationship to our total population than any other country in the world.

*Continued on page 256*


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Yet Dr. Cabot argues that in those countries where there are fewer physicians in proportion to the total population the people get more medical service and the doctors are better off. Has he failed to study the report of the Commission on Medical Education? Does he really know what is going on in organized medicine? When he says that efforts to stem fee splitting have been futile he fails to realize the great change that has taken place in this one factor during the past twenty years. Not long ago Dr. Cabot sat beside me at a banquet and heard high tribute paid to Dr. Franklin H. Martin and the American College of Surgeons for their accomplishments in this connection. His statement that the courts have insisted in many instances on re-instatement of members who have been expelled cannot be substantiated by the citation of cases. Furthermore he knows, and everyone else knows, that freedom of choice of a physician still obtains in the vast majority of cases of sick people in this country.

Space does not permit the citation here of the vast amount of documentary evidence on this subject, available to any interested reader through the Bureau of Medical Economics of the American Medical Association. This Bureau has made a careful study of the distribution of medical service, of physicians' fees, of sickness insurance, of hundreds of plans for overcoming the inadequacies of medical care both here and abroad, and it offers all of this material in pamphlets, distributed both free and at trifling sums to any one who wishes them.

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